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# The Nation

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## Events of the Week.

LORD GREY has made a powerful contribution to the cause of the League of Nations. His pamphlet is issued, we believe, with the approval and under the auspices of the Government. Its text is the one we ventured to commend to our readers when the war broke out—"Utopia or Hell." Lord Grey could not steer Europe out of Hell; so now he directs it to Utopia. The stake in the war, he insists, is not victory, but civilization; and so, as the one plank of safety, he commends internationalism. Governments, to exist at all, must consent to "some limitation upon the national action of each." The old unlimited right to resort to individual force must be qualified by "conference," "conciliation," "arbitration"; and "combined force" must be used against the recalcitrant. Lord Grey assumes that Germany must be invited to join the League; only he fears that she will not do so till she sees that individual force will not pay, and has surrendered her dream of single-power domination. Our own view is that she is much nearer this surrender than we think. Here at least is the offer. Lord Grey would have given her all she had a right to ask without war. She could have had justice then; she can have it now, and she will never get more. Why should she refuse? If her people know it, they will not refuse. No people could refuse. Then why should there not be peace?

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THE Government, pressed by Lord Midleton and the Tory Moderates, has apparently consented to re-order its disorderly self. The transaction is a curious one; it looks as if Mr. George, who is quick at the up-take, had anticipated Lord Midleton's demand, and made the new arrangement of a Committee of Home Affairs before it could be publicly pressed on him. The concession is, of course, a confession. The old confusion was too bad to continue. In a complicated statement, Lord Curzon declared that the Government, which he likened to a Durbar, now consisted (a) of a War Cabinet; (b) of a number of "permanent" Committees (including a Home Affairs Committee, under Mr. Chamberlain), and (c) of a still greater number of "ad hoc" Committees, of which ninety-two had already been appointed! This, of course, is unadulterated bureaucracy. In effect, it implies that the springs

of government reside in the Secretariat, who again communicate with the under-warrens of officials, admittedly numbering over 100,000. This is the Government of England.

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IN 1916 the Austrian offensive began on May 14th. This year it opened a month later, with much greater weight, with German tactics, and with considerable skill. A feint attack was made in the morning of the 14th upon the Tonale Pass where the Italian frontier looks westward to France. It was here that some thought the main attack would be made; but though the operation was very carefully prepared with a veiled approach and heavy artillery concentration, though the shock troops were deployed after the latest German model, the number of the effectives made it clear that the main blow would be elsewhere. The first infantry assault was delivered in the first light of the day, and another powerful attack was made at nightfall. Only the covering zone was entered, and counter-attacks re-established the position. The offensive proper opened upon the morning of Saturday, 15th, when, after a short but intense bombardment of the whole front between the Adige and the sea by numerous pieces of every calibre, the infantry advanced to the attack on a front of about ninety miles, from Asiago to the sea. The positions at Asiago were held by the British with the French across the Brenta on their right. Lord Cavan's little force has been moved across from its first positions on Montello, the pivot of the Piave for some time, and their positions were well organized for attack. Yet the Italian positions, as a whole, were certainly not free from obvious disadvantages, and these offered his chance to Field-Marshal Boroevic.

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OVER the whole of the battlefield the attack was delivered with the utmost violence; but the main thrusts were on the Piave front, against Montello, across the river towards the Treviso railway from the north, and across the Piave between Fossalta and the sea. In the mountains further west vast bodies of men could neither be concentrated nor deployed with any ease; but the sector of attack was made as large as possible so that the special thrusts would have the best chances of success. It is another of the points taken from the recent German war method. The attack upon the British positions at Asiago was delivered with four divisions, and on the left it gained some ground; but the reaction was prompt, and the positions were practically restored in their entirety. From first to last the British took over 1,000 prisoners. The same fate befel the attack on the French positions. On Mt. Grappa the Austrians seem to have achieved some success. But between the Adige and the Brenta the Austrian attack suffered heavily without gaining sufficient to justify its joining battle. There was a great concentration of guns against these mountain positions; but the defence was too strong.

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MARSHAL BOROEVIC, who had his position in the fierce battles on the Isonzo, chose the river line of the Piave for his main attack, and apparently the sector near the sea for his chief thrust. Upon this sector it is easier

to concentrate and use masses of men, and an immediately obvious success lay nearer. The fall of Treviso or Venice would figure well in the *communiqués*, and the first lay only the space which has been covered by the Germans on two or three occasions recently in a single day's march. But if either or both could be taken, a drastic readjustment would be necessary in the Italian positions. The mountain fringe which formed the defensive line towards the north is thin; but the Piave is of less value as an obstacle, except in its tempestuous moods. The Archduke Joseph commanded the 6th Army on the Montello sector, and von Wurm the army on the Lower Piave. The mountain bastion of Montello was attacked from the north and east. The Piave makes here a rough curve, which follows the line of Montello. On its south-eastern fringe stands Nervesa on the river, and it was there that one of the crossings took place. The other crossing took place over the sector which covers the two railways, the Treviso-Castelfranco line, and the coast line to Venice.

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At the end of the first day the Austrians held a precarious bridgehead across the Piave, were established on the eastern slopes of Montello, held some ground on Mount Grappa, and was in the fighting zone in one or two places. They claimed 16,000 prisoners, a figure which for the rhythm of the fighting seems highly inflated, and the Allies took 3,000 prisoners. On the second day the fighting on the mountain sector had fallen to the defensive against the energetic Allied counter-attacks. The struggle had developed in the Montello bastion, and the north-eastern slope was occupied by the Austrians. Elsewhere the only other serious movement was the advance from S. Dona di Piave, which led to the capture of Capo Sile. In this area of streams and lagoons the advance most nearly threatened Venice. And yet from merely topographical considerations one would have said that nowhere could headway be made with greater difficulty. It is upon this sector that Boroevic is now relying to deliver his offensive from a virtual defeat. Checked it has been already; but on the third day of the battle von Wurm had contrived to reach the Fossalta canal, which lies west of the Piave, at one point within ten miles of Venice.

\* \* \*

ALREADY we could see the difference between the German tactics when used by the Germans and when interpreted by the Austrians. The German blows fall so fast that the new offensive looks like one continuous thrust. In the Austrian attack the successive waves are more obvious. On the third day of the battle heavy reinforcements were thrown in on the Piave, and the struggle continued fiercely on Tuesday. By this time the river was in flood and the Austrian bridges were being washed away. The difficulties of crossing were further exaggerated by the Allied aeroplanes, which persistently flew low over the river and fired thousands of rounds from their machine-guns. The improvised bridges were destroyed time and again, and if it had not been for the smoke screen, under cover of which the first advance was made, it is probable the crossing would never have been possible. At present, then, the Austrian offensive has gone so poorly that we have some cause for congratulation. If we are to judge by the courage and skill of our Ally in the first days of this tremendous battle, the Austrians are being patiently and irrevocably pushed back again to the river bank. Already the whole movement may be written off a failure.

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DR. TROELSTRA, the Dutch Socialist leader, is not to be allowed to land in England, although he has been invited by the British Labor Conference. In response to the usual stupid outcry against anyone (not a diplomatist by profession) who has been guilty of talking to a German Socialist, another weapon is given to the German war propagandist. Troelstra's offences are three. He has had a preliminary talk with Herr Scheidemann. This would have made his report to the British Labor Conference particularly valuable. He has at one time declared that he is not the enemy of Germany. As a neutral, as

a Socialist, as a man who has made it his business to do what he can to keep the International alive, it is indeed difficult to see what else he could have said. The Queen of Holland herself could not be more discreet. His third villainy is that when the Germans opened the unrestricted submarine war, he assured a German journalist that Holland would not declare war on Germany even if Dutch vessels were torpedoed. No doubt there is some peculiar wickedness in telling the manifest truth to a German journalist who was perfectly well aware of it already. But great as is the evidence of Dr. Troelstra's guilt, we cannot but regret that the fourth, and by far the most convincing indictment, should have been suppressed. He is undoubtedly anxious for peace, and might have been an important agent in advancing it. That, no doubt, is enough. Peace is a kind of disease; M. Troelstra might have carried the contagion. So he is to be kept quarantined in Holland.

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THE policy to advocate which Mrs. Pankhurst was sent to America with the approval of the British Government has been formulated with an engaging exactness. The correspondent of the "Daily News" informs us that M. Wourgaft, the Petrograd director of the International Bank of Commerce, demands that Siberia should be invaded by a force consisting of 400,000 Japanese and as many Chinese, with the addition of 25,000 Americans. One cannot help believing that M. Wourgaft is a Baltic German. If he is a genuine Russian, let us hope that he is an unique specimen of the renegade. A more insensate programme of action could certainly not be conceived outside Bedlam. Even if it be granted that the great majority of the Russians who do not belong to the proletariat desire, as they probably do desire, armed intervention by the Allies, it is perfectly certain that all of them—with the exception of M. Wourgaft—would reject any plan of yellow intervention. The most probable result of such an attempt would be to induce the Russian bourgeois to make common cause with the Bolsheviks, and to make both seek German aid. We do not know how far this mad scheme is really contemplated by the English or the French authorities, but we have learned to be prepared for the worst. And in that case it is the pressing duty of British Labor to give heed to the advice contained in the "Daily News" message and stand firmly behind President Wilson and his Russian policy.

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BARON BURIAN has chosen the familiar method of an interview with the Vienna "Fremden-Blatt" to reply to Lord Milner. He dwells on the complete unity obtaining between Germany and Austria-Hungary, and indeed nobody will be inclined to question it now. But it is precisely because Burian can now be regarded as the mouthpiece of Berlin that his very open invitation to Lord Milner to find out how far removed are the terms of the Central Powers from the world-dominion imputed to them is worth attention. Burian comes fresh from Berlin, where he undoubtedly put some anxious questions as to how long the war would go on, and he evidently received permission to do what he could to engage conversations. There is no reason why his suggestion should not be accepted. The habit of regarding Berlin as a bogey that will gobble up anyone who asks on what terms it would like to conclude peace hardly does credit to the firmness of our statesmanship. If we know what we want, there is no harm in asking Burian what Berlin is inclined to give, and there might be a very great deal of good.

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VIENNA is almost in revolution. The bread ration has been cut down to two slices a day; this semi-starvation diet is put down to deliberate German blackmail; rioting has broken out, and the Alliance seems shaken to its foundation. To have to halve the bread-ration at the moment of what seems to be a thoroughly unsuccessful offensive is an act of necessity; but it looks more like an act of desperation. Taken in conjunction with the fact that the vitally necessary German divisions were, as far as we can tell, conspicuous by their absence from the

Austrian attack, the reduction of the bread ration might almost indicate that Austria had chosen the desperate remedy of the old régime in Petrograd in the early spring of 1917. It is conceivable that the authorities in Vienna may have elected to provoke an uprising in order to have a rebellion that they can manage instead of one they cannot. A violent strike movement, successfully suppressed, would afford a good excuse for the reintroduction of the absolutist régime.

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MEANWHILE the Turks, whose insatiable appetite for compensations in Europe has been the principal cause of the condominiums difficulty with Bulgaria, are making headway in pursuit of their Pan-Turanian ideal. The Turkish *communiqué* of June 14th announced that Turkish forces had occupied both shores of Lake Urmia and the town of Tabriz "with a view to protecting the wing of our army on the Caucasian front." The interest of this announcement is that it proclaims an open violation of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, by which the contracting parties bound themselves to protect the integrity of Persia. This benevolent provision was at the time much exploited by the German Press. The contrast between the attitude of the Central Powers and that of England was to be such that Nationalist Persia would welcome with open arms the peaceful penetration of the Central Powers. The Turks would seem to have put an end to this pleasant dream of automatic empire. One would imagine that the authorities in Berlin have begun to regard the Turks as giving more trouble than they are worth.

\* \* \*

M. RADOSLAVOV, the Bulgarian Premier, has resigned and M. Malinov has been asked to form a Cabinet. M. Malinov certainly was a Russophil in 1915, but it would be hazardous to suggest that he is a Russophil still. There are probably very few Bulgarians who are nowadays. It is not a practical policy for a Bulgarian patriot, and, whatever grudge we may owe Bulgaria, one cannot deny that the majority of Bulgarians are patriots. M. Radoslavov fell because his conduct of Bulgarian affairs was attacked from many sides. Perhaps the most important element in the movement against him was the discontent with the Bulgarian food-supply. Radoslavov was responsible for handing over to the Central Powers last year far more food than Bulgaria could afford to give, with the result that this year the country is very hard put to it. Subordinate to this is the general dissatisfaction with the condominium for the Northern Dobrudja instead of its restoration to Bulgaria. A third factor is the obscurity of the situation with regard to Greece. Inspired German newspapers, like the "Kölnische Zeitung," still argue that the Central Powers are not at war with Greece. Whether this is in order to maintain the *rapprochement* with King Constantine, or to escape the obligation of helping Bulgaria against the Greek Army, we cannot say. But the recent Greek success on the Salonika Front certainly dealt a very serious blow to Radoslavov's prestige; and in all probability it was the decisive event. But his replacement by Malinov does not imply an Ententophil policy. It does, however, give the Entente the opportunity of preventing by judicious work that incorporation of Bulgaria in Mittel-Europa which Berlin would like to achieve.

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J. A. H. writes us:—

In support of your admirable article last week, may I summarize the objections against the proposal (apparently endorsed by Mr. Barnes of the War Cabinet) to form a provisional League of Nations now out of the Allies?

Unless all the Great Powers are members of the League, it is admitted that there can be no disarmament and no security for the future. Germany would, in any case, be the Power most reluctant to enter such a League. In forming the League, therefore, it is most important to act in such a way as not to make her suspicious regarding the purposes of the League. The advocates of the policy of a League now made up of the Allies appear to hold that to present Germany with a *fait accompli* would impress her favorably with the opportunity of entering the League when peace was made. But surely this is wild psychology. The whole

atmosphere of war is one of insane suspicion. Suppose the Central Powers formed themselves now into a League of Nations with an open offer to us to enter. Should we look at it, or think it genuine? How, then, must a League formed exclusively of their enemies appear to Germany? During the war it could perform no really serviceable function of a League of Nations. It could take no step towards disarmament or towards the Open Door or towards establishing the principle or practice of national autocracy. It would simply be the War Alliance declaring itself permanent, and hedged round with the economic weapons of boycott and discrimination necessitated by the war-conditions. Its real intentions towards Germany might be excellent, but all appearances would be against it. Those who want either to destroy the proposal of a League, or to exclude Germany from that League, will support the project to form the League now. For the sure effect would be to impel, and probably enable, the Central Powers to make a separate League, and so the nucleus of the next world-war will be formed before this has ended.

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ON this point we cannot do better than follow the excellent lead given by the very distinguished French Commission. This body, with M. Léon Bourgeois as Chairman, was appointed by the French Government to "study the conditions on which the association between States—universally known by the name of the Society of Nations—might be established," and it has now issued its statement of principles. It decided generally to aim not at an international political State, but at substituting the reign of law for that of force. But its main practical decision was not to set up a League without further ado, but to promote a series of studies of the subject in all its aspects by the Allies, so as to be able to "approach it with full knowledge when it comes up for discussion in the negotiations for the Treaty of Peace." This seems to us an entirely wise proceeding. It is at the Peace Conference, and in the interests of peace, that the plan of the League will be wanted, not as a mere fortification of our War Alliance.

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PERHAPS owing to the number of women who are preparing to offer themselves as Parliamentary candidates at the next General Election, the Law Officers of the Crown are instructed to inquire into the status of women making the claim. It will be remembered that lately the returning officer for the Keighley by-election said he would have accepted Miss Nina Boyle's nomination paper but for a technical error. By Lord Brougham's Act of 1854, it was enacted that the word "men" should be held to include women, unless the contrary were expressly stated. But, though the word "man" was substituted for "male person" in the Reform Act of 1867, the Court of Common Pleas (in the case known as Chorlton *v.* Lings) decided in 1868 that, although the word "man" must be held to include women, "this did not apply to the privileges granted by the State," and that "the same words shall for the purpose of voting apply to men only, but for the purpose of taxation shall include women." Similar decisions were given in the case of Lady Sandhurst, Miss Cobden, and Miss Cons (who claimed the right of election to the first London County Council, in 1888), and in the case of the Women Graduates who claimed to vote in a Parliamentary election for St. Andrews University in 1906.

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APART from such cases, the legal question appears to turn upon the interpretation of a word in the schedule to the Ballot Act. It says the nomination paper must be delivered "by the candidate, his proposer or seconder." Does Lord Brougham's Act cover the word "his"? Or is the claim to election one of "the privileges granted by the State" from which women are excluded? In any case, whatever legal precedents and interpretations may imply, it is evident that the whole situation has been changed by the admission of women to the Parliamentary Franchise, as well as by the wide recognition of their invaluable service in nearly all departments of the State, to say nothing of their service as mothers and educators of their children. It may be necessary to soothe the lawyers by passing a special Act, but that cannot long be delayed.

## Politics and Affairs.

### OUR DURBAR.

In the course of the debate on the latest scheme of Ministerial reconstruction, Lord Curzon gave an excellent description of the Government of which he is a distinguished member. The War Cabinet resembled, he said, a Durbar, the Oriental assembly of Indian Princes and their over-lord. There, in almost daily converse, sit Mr. George and his Rajahs, encompassed by "experts," and approached through a barbed-wire entanglement of Committees. Lord Curzon proceeded to outline a few of these new and interesting objects in our constitutional landscape. There are the *ad hoc* Committees, of which it appears there have been ninety-two. In more intimate association with the Throne-room are the Permanent Committees. Of such is the Priorities Committee, whatever that may be. Then there is the Economic Defence-and Developments Committee. That we conceive as a supernumerary Board of Trade, for the joint establishment of Capitalism and Protectionism in the British State. A third is the Committee on Home Affairs, with Mr. Chamberlain as a kind of Sub-Premier. This Committee meets once a week, and attends to the affairs of these unimportant islands. Thus an intricate and irresponsible bureaucracy has been secretly installed in the place once occupied by a Cabinet springing directly from Parliament, and collectively responsible to it. The existence of these organs of Government was unknown to the nation or its representatives. Their method and function are equally obscure. All that we know is that we had one kind of Government in December, 1916, and that in June, 1918, we have another. It was open to Mr. George, when he displaced Mr. Asquith, to adapt the Cabinet system to the needs of the war by reducing its numbers, and regularizing and modifying its structure. He preferred to destroy it and to substitute a Durbar. The result is before the world. Mr. Lloyd George's conduct of war hardly establishes his reputed genius for it. But his management of our home affairs will always be cited as a spirited kind of civil strife. The departments, unrepresented in the Cabinet, and deprived of the natural clearing house which it provided, fight it out between them. As in administration so in politics. The Prime Minister's art of government is to provide a double cure for all complaints, and, having no political principles, to apply them all in turn. Ireland has her Home Rule Bill and her government of Orangemen, soldiers, and coercionists. Great Britain can set her Socialist laws against the more than Prussian bureaucracy which directs them. The War Cabinet paints a broad blazon of "efficiency" on its shield, and is supposed to be superhumanly concentrated on the war. In practice it is seen to be completely distracted between it and the most minute departmental concerns. As for the Constitution, it is thrown aside like an old coat, unsuited to the gay adventure of the war and of Mr. George's highly entertaining career. Its working principle, evolved in the course of centuries, and tested in four great wars, has been to group the heads of the administrative offices in a single High Committee, called the Cabinet. Military authorities are, we think, almost agreed in finding this principle applicable in the main to the management of a war. That is to say, they would combine the heads of the war departments, with, or without the actual military chiefs, in a sub-Committee of the Cabinet, clothed with ample powers of direction. Till a few weeks ago Mr. George's War

Cabinet contained neither a Foreign Secretary, nor a War Secretary, nor a First Lord of the Admiralty. The first has had his lamentable place on the doorstep of Downing Street, while from the inside Mr. George and his Kindergarten arranged the transactions that mattered. The second and the third have been compelled to yield their historic place in council to Mr. Barnes and Mr. Bonar Law.

The real government of England is neither in these men's hands nor in their master's. It belongs to a locust swarm of officials, whose London establishment alone is computed to approach the strength of three Army Corps. Nothing else worth speaking of exists as a ruling force. The House of Commons is a handy machine for passing Mr. Law's "token" estimates and endorsing Mr. George's blank cheques. The bad word, Placeman, has come back to our politics from its origin in a disreputable period in English history. An eighth of the popular Chamber now consists of men holding offices of profit under the Crown. Mr. Lloyd George has enlisted another force in his personal service. He has become the Jupiter Pluvius of nobility. A drenching shower of titles, cheapened by their number and the character of many of the recipients, descends on an ever swelling host of clients, gentle and simple, of the Administration. It is open house for the *arriviste*; his name is Legion, and his breast glitters with Orders. Thus adventures are for the adventurous, even the great adventure of Death. For the war goes on as if it would never stop, and youth, bound to its Ixion wheel, approaches its fifth year of unrelieved and seemingly unending agony.

This is the government of Mr. George. In the prevailing lack of public spirit the full examination of its follies will be postponed till the hour when the country has a brief breathing-space from their consequences. But in Monday's "Times" Mr. Bowles throws his searchlight on to one corner of the vineyard. The Ministry of Munitions was the special creature of the Prime Minister. It was indeed his second conspicuous act of administration. His first was the stroke of genius which turned the Treasury from a department for saving money into an agency for spending it. The Ministry of Munitions does credit to the same fertile parentage. In a single year it has spent the equivalent of a gigantic National Debt. Of this amount—£522,400,000—£17,000,000 were either inaccurately set down in the books of the Department, or not accounted for at all, nor can the ultimate deposit of honesty and efficiency ever be sifted out from the waste. The country's wealth, pouring down this sink and a hundred others like it, is subject (as another correspondent of the "Times" points out) to such control by the Treasury as thirty-eight clerks can supply. The sum of all this thriftlessness must seem to all thoughtful minds to supply the measure of the shrinkage of the country's war-effort. As England's wealth contracts, like the *peau de chagrin*, with each spendthrift demand on it, her arm is shortened to repel her enemy's stroke or to direct her own. The Government, on Mr. Bonar Law's admission, has now achieved a *daily* expenditure of seven and three-quarter millions, and has committed the country to a total liability of over seven thousand and a-quarter millions. In a single year it has raised the expenditure of the nation from two thousand to three thousand millions. Its expenditure on staff and buildings to house its myriad-headed bureaucracy is equivalent, says Major Collins, to a sixpenny income-tax. The end of the *Enfant Prodigue* who governs us no one can foresee. But he has already determined the immediate fate of England. She went into the war a rich creditor nation;





she will emerge from it a poor and heavily indebted one. Her poverty may pass. But many have learned to feed out of Mr. George's hand, and his successors will not find it easy to stay his universal bounty.

Now, we anticipate no kind of relief from the revision of the Government into a War Cabinet and a "Home Affairs Committee." That is the ancient Georgian device of evading one difficulty by creating another. There was one Cabinet before; there will now in effect be two; if we are to have the full benefit of Mr. Hughes's statesmanship, there will be three. The Upper or War Cabinet will not be quit of a number of distracting administrative functions, for it will be the Court of Appeal for the Lower or Home Cabinet, as well as the fount of legislation. Lord Curzon and Mr. Law minimize the function of the Home Affairs Committee; but it is in effect a rival of the War Cabinet. But Cabinet unity need never have been broken. The true line of efficiency in the conduct of the war lies, as it has always lain, in two simple reforms. The first is the formation of a War Committee, consisting of the Prime Minister and the heads of the services in which all the problems of war arise, and all the knowledge of them is concentrated. The second is the association with this body of the General Staff, separated from administrative worries and organized for the sole end of "thinking out" the war, and commanding the finished results of this process to the Cabinet. Mr. Lloyd George had no use for the first plan, for it barred his way to the Premiership. He never loyally tried the second, because he preferred his peculiar ideas of strategy and command to those of Sir William Robertson. *Circumspice.* The battles of March to June were fought under his plan or the adumbrations of it. His War Cabinet was responsible for the divisions it neglected to fill and the line it extended too far. It had ample warning of the Russian breakdown. But it and its chief conceived the supreme folly of the comparative unimportance of the Western Front. The line was "impenetrable"; we had even over-assured our defence of it. For this failure in judgment Mr. George cannot blame Sir William Robertson, Mr. Asquith, Mr. de Valera, the Russian Revolution, or the Cocoa Press. He must answer for his own mistakes, and the nation must come to an account with its real debtor. It is in a grave pass, for it has got the wrong man. He in turn chose the wrong system, and employed the wrong agents. His Government is one of proved inadequacy to the country's gigantic need. But it has fastened itself on public opinion by a network of influences more potent even than the all-compelling bond of the war. Their removal is a high and arduous work of patriotism; for either they will fall or England.

#### THE POLISH PROBLEM AND THE CENTRAL POWERS.

COUNT BURIAN has been to Berlin. What he did there no one exactly knows, and it may be that he is not quite certain himself. A month ago, when his visit was first rumored in the Press, it was to be the beginning of the real thing. They were to cut the cackle about the new "deepened and extended" alliance, and come to the 'osse. The political and economic negotiations were to begin. About a fortnight later it was allowed to emerge that his visit was largely one of ceremony, as it were, an afternoon call on Count Hertling, which would of necessity be too short to admit of a thorough discussion of all the questions or final decisions upon them. A little later still, a few hours before Burian's train had left the station in Vienna, the general cue was to explain that all the questions were so intimately dependent upon

the final result of the war that it was really quite impossible to settle any of them, and in regard to the most urgent and thorny of all, the Polish question, it transpired that Burian had not after all abandoned the Austro-Polish solution. On the contrary, he intended to fight for it. But the German Government regarded this solution as undesirable. In fact, as the "Frankfurter Zeitung" reluctantly admitted, "in the general joy and satisfaction at the conversations at German Headquarters, they had underestimated this important question."

So the great alliance scheme is held up by the Polish problem. It is likely to remain so. The German Jingoes generously suggest that Austria should completely surrender Galicia to the new Poland, in order that they, while keeping Prussian Poland, shall be able to annex what they want from Congress Poland without coming into direct conflict with the Poles of the Dual Monarchy or their Habsburg ruler. Austria, of course, will not hear of this diminution of her territories and her prestige. On the other hand, the Vistula Poles and those of Galicia are determined that Galicia shall be no longer separated from Congress Poland. If they cannot be united in a really independent Poland, they will be united under the Habsburg, who must require their acceptance of this solution by seeing to it that the Germans are not allowed to annex the Dombrowa basin or the Narew line, and that the Cholm territory is taken back from the Ukraine and restored to them. Austria, no doubt, would be glad enough to do it, and the Emperor himself, who is personally pledged in the matter, is probably very anxious to meet their wishes. But Germany is perfectly inexorable. Apart from the fact that her rulers have no intention of giving up annexations of Polish territory, there is a general agreement among the German people that the Austro-Polish solution would be a bad thing for them. It would increase the Slav population of the Habsburg Empire, and though it would for the moment give the Germans a majority in the diminished Austrian Reichsrat, and thus, in theory, base the German alliance on a safe two-thirds (German and Magyar) of a trialistic Austria-Hungary, it would in reality make the old Prussian policy of repressing her Poles dangerous if not quite impossible, and give the balance of power in Austria into the hands of a body of German Socialists, who are more nearly genuine than any in the world except the Russians. A third solution, advocated by the German Conservatives, is that Austria should keep Galicia, Prussia should keep Silesia and whatever portions of Congress Poland she desired, while the mutilated remains of Poland should be left to their fate. The immediate result of that (probably a welcome result to the extremist type of Prussian Junker) would be that government by *Ukase* would become an institution in Austria. No Parliament could ever meet, for the Slav opposition would be permanently united. How long Austria could stand such a régime without exploding no one can say, but it certainly would not last very long.

Thus no solution of the Polish question is possible for the Central Powers, so long as Germany and Austria-Hungary remain independent sovereign States. To leave the question where it stands at present is equally impossible, because the Austrian Poles are already making their support of the von Seidler Government dependent on the satisfaction of their demands. Every attempt will be made to induce the Poles to pass the Austrian Budget in company with the Germans, and von Twardowski, the Austrian Minister for Galicia (who is a Prussian Pole by birth and served his time in the German Army) has been doing all he can to discover a *modus vivendi*. It is possible that the Poles in the Reichsrat, who are naturally anxious to restore the devastation wrought by the Russian invasions of Galicia, will agree to vote a four-months' Budget which contains duly generous subventions for the purpose on the understanding that absolutely no decision is taken on the larger question for the moment. But the decision will have to be taken if the new alliance is to become a reality.

The only way out of the vicious circle is by an act of creative statesmanship. For the imaginative states-

man the Mittel-Europa solution proposed by Naumann might be possible. By this, when Germany and Austria-Hungary have become one single territory for political, economic, and military purposes—how this single territory would be governed Naumann alone knows—Poland would be attached to it. This scheme is as beautiful as it is impossible of accomplishment. The difficulties of sovereignty and administration would be insuperable, and if they were not, the objections of the agrarians throughout the Central Powers to a scheme which allowed Polish agricultural produce to compete on an equality with their own, would be strong enough to carry the day against it. The other great theoretical solution is that Austria should surrender Galicia, which, united with Congress Poland, should then join in a close political, economic, and military alliance with Germany; in return for this sacrifice the Habsburg Empire should receive the South Slav State into which Serbia and Montenegro would be incorporated. This also is not really practical politics. It would mean either removing Croatia and Slavonia from the Hungarian Crown, which could only be successfully accomplished after a punitive military expedition against the Magyars, or including Serbia and Montenegro in a South Slav State under Magyar control. And even the Magyars, who are willing and ready to control almost anything, are quite clear that this would never do. They would be swallowed up, and within a year or two sink from their proud tyranny into a position analogous to that which the German-Austrians at present enjoy in the other half of the Dual Monarchy.

In other words, the situation is that on the German side they profess to regard the firm establishment of the new alliance in all its spheres as an essential preliminary to a settlement of the Polish question, while on the Austrian side the Polish settlement is held to be necessary before the consolidation of the alliance can take place. In order, however, to be in a position to maintain her demand against the vast German superiority in strength, it is essential that the support of the Magyars (which now again means the support of Tisza) should be secured for the Austro-Polish solution. At the beginning of May it was confidently rumored that this had been obtained, and the price paid for it was said to have been that Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina should be included in the Hungarian dominions. But these great political concessions would bring with them no guarantee that the Austro-Polish solution would be seriously considered by Germany, and Wekerle's ambiguous statement a few days ago made one thing perfectly clear. The Magyars do not dream of sacrificing the privileged position they have acquired under the dualistic system.

"Despite our sympathies (said Wekerle), however, our standpoint is that our constitutional position must undergo no alteration; that we can maintain and settle with complete freedom our internal affairs without any interference or reflex influence, and, of course, look after our interests. Widely divergent views have been expressed regarding the solution of the Polish question, not only in Germany, where no statement whatever has been made from official circles, but also, as the present interpellation shows, in this country and in Polish circles. This question has not as yet arrived at a stage at which we or Germany can define our attitude, while Poland, too, has not yet been in a position to define its own standpoint on this question."

But an Austro-Polish solution, which should leave the Magyars free to settle their own affairs "without interference or reflex influence," is inconceivable. If it is to be a solution at all, it implies the recasting of the Dual Monarchy into a trialistic form.

Meanwhile, the Poles are anxious not merely about their western frontier, but also about their frontiers on the east and north-east. How much will finally be given to Lithuania and to the Ukraine? On the settlement of these frontiers their attitude to the Central Powers depends, and this settlement depends in its turn upon the whole of German policy with regard to Russia in the East. In spite of the propaganda of the Polish National Democrats here and in France, there is not the least reason to suppose that the Poles would not be prepared, and even delighted, to enter into a permanent

alliance with the Central Powers if their territorial wishes were satisfied. But whether Germany would be prepared to grant them this satisfaction depends wholly on the turn taken by affairs in Russia. The German coup d'état in the Ukraine indicates pretty clearly that Germany would like to see the Ukraine once more amalgamated with a Great Russia in which the Bolshevik supremacy had been overthrown by a bourgeois régime, which would naturally seek a close alliance with Germany. The Hetman's Ukraine is to serve as a centre from which "stable government" can be disseminated into Great Russia, and the politicians are fully aware that the Hetman's government is mainly composed of Great Russian Cadets. Undoubtedly, it will be a great deal more difficult for Germany to repeat her Finnish methods in Great Russia; but she may succeed, particularly as the Entente Powers are in the habit of giving a welcome to any bourgeois counter-revolutionary movement in Russia without pausing to inquire whether it is in reality pro-German or not. If this German policy were to prove successful, Germany would feel herself free to partition Poland without any danger. Russia would be given her share, and a mutually satisfactory arrangement about the Baltic Provinces would be relatively easy to achieve. Until this scheme, which promises a much more attractive future for Germany in the East, has finally proved a failure, Germany will certainly postpone any solution of the Polish problem which prevents her from obtaining the frontier securities she desires. This postponement will inevitably make Austria weaker and weaker politically, for the Poles will never consent to become the reliable Government Party which they once were, so long as their future remains in suspense. "Germany and we," said Wekerle in the statement we quoted. The omission of Austria was doubtless deliberate. But perhaps it will not be so easy as the Magyars imagine to join hands with Germany across a prostrate Austria, and the Magyars were always liable to forget that they themselves were only a link in a chain of German policy. If the chain could be made shorter and stronger across a prostrate Poland, Germany might be ready to leave the Dual Monarchy to its own decrepitude.

#### WRECKING THE LEAGUE.

WHEN the recommendations of the Paris Economic Conference were first launched upon the world two years ago, many Free Traders and Internationalists believed, or pretended to believe, that the after-war protectionism which they contained was not seriously meant. By this time their minds must be disabused of this belief. At first little was done to give material expression to the Imperial and Allied preferences, the discriminations and boycotts, which the document foreshadowed. But the business interests, who saw their opportunity in the heated atmosphere of war and the restrictions upon trade which it involved, soon got to work. They began to press for administrative and legislative action, in the shape of tariffs, subsidies, or other Government assistance at the expense of the consumer, the taxpayer, or both. These demands they urged under various disguises. "National Defence," "Conservation of National Resources," "Imperial Self-sufficiency," "Allied Economy" and "Independence of Foreign and Enemy Sources of Supply" were their watchwords. Small contributions soon came in by way of restricting transport, embargoes upon foreign luxuries unaccompanied by excise upon competing home products, and the like. Then the Colonial Office was pressed into the service, with its famous export tax on palm kernels exported from West Africa to foreign countries. This was primarily intended as a measure against Germany, and incidentally designed to conserve these important supplies for the exclusive use of the British Empire. Next came the administrative action of the Indian Government in raising the import duties upon cotton without a corresponding rise of the excise, a definite imposition of Protection for the mill-owners of Bombay at the expense of Lancashire and the Indian consumer. Other curious

little pranks followed, such as the export tax of £2 per ton upon the export of raw cocoa from the Gold Coast. A larger incursion into post-war economics was made by the Corn Production Act, in which growers of wheat and oats were guaranteed a minimum price, not only for the war period, but up to 1922, with the object of stimulating this branch of agriculture by subsidies. Next we may mention the Non-Ferrous Metals Act, by which dealers and workers in zinc, copper, tin, lead, nickel, and other ores are subjected to a rigorous system of license and inspection, to remain in force for five years after the war.

But all this is small game in comparison with the proposals which are now pouring forth from the various Committees upon Reconstruction and Industrial and Commercial Policy aiming to transform our entire economic structure. We have already discussed the main features of the General Report of the Balfour of Burleigh Committee with its proposals (1) to "promote and safeguard"—"industries of a special or pivotal character"; (2) to provide Government assistance to other "important" industries that are not strong enough to maintain themselves against "undue foreign competition"; (3) to readjust and develop the economic relations of the Empire; (4) to develop trade between our Empire and the Allies; and (5) to discriminate "for a time at least" against trade with the present enemy countries. We are also invited to place protective duties against "dumped" and "sweated" goods, and to take further measures to secure the new trades that have been artificially planted or stimulated during the war. The discrimination against enemy countries is to be given "by the simple imposition of duties upon all goods imported" from them. But in order to comprehend the real nature of this movement it is necessary to follow the Reports of the various Departmental Trade Committees. There one sees every group of traders "following the gleam" of public subsidies, protective tariffs, monopoly of public contracts, and various other forms of loot. Where, as in the electrical trades, there is danger lest British consumers should continue to buy better or cheaper articles from Germany, they propose "the prohibition of enemy goods for a period," and the Interim Report of the General Committee urges that the present prohibition of all goods of enemy origin should be maintained for at least a year after the war, and for as much longer as the Government may deem expedient.

But most of the trade proposals regarding "key" industries, dumping, sweated imports, public contracts, and the like, are not directed exclusively against Germany. They are simply protectionist, preying upon the patriotic fears and passions of the war-atmosphere and converting them into solid cash, high prices, and exclusive markets. These traders want for themselves, first, the home market; secondly, the resources and markets of the Empire; thirdly, the boycott of competing foreign goods. As Germany has been our most formidable competitor, this third motive screens itself behind war-feeling. But the anti-dumping and anti-sweating policy is clearly designed to be a weapon of general use against any "foreigners" whose materials, skill, or enterprise enable them to put into our markets cheaper or better articles than our own people can. Add to this the new principle of safeguarding of trades of national importance, and our Protectionists are furnished with all they require for the pursuit of their profitable career in the realm of practical politics.

It is, of course, true that this protection policy is crossed and muddled up with other considerations of the Empire and the Alliance, which also reach out into the contemplated period of peace. So we have an Interim Report on Treatment of Exports from the United Kingdom and British Overseas Possessions, which proposes to secure "priority" for the requirements of the Allies in certain important commodities, and a prohibition of their export to any other country. And yet the General Report clearly recognizes the danger of discriminating against neutral countries! Other Committees ask for protection of "key" industries, with prohibition of enemy imports for five or even ten years, and recommend the establishment of a "Special

Industries Board" empowered to procure grants or subsidies for trades "essential to national safety as being indispensable to important British industries." The general or cumulative effect of these proposals, if they are carried out, would be to reduce the volume and regulate the channels of our trade, to give strong groups of traders heavy pulls upon the public purse, to promote trade combines, and to hand over the consumer helpless and bound to the protected traders. The aggregate productivity of the industry and commerce of this country would of necessity be impaired, at a time when it is agreed that every effort should be made to enlarge it. For high productivity hinges upon the freest access to all foreign markets both for buying and for selling. And all the laws and proposals which we have cited aim at restricting these free markets.

But important as these economic considerations are in their bearing upon the wealth of our nation, they are far more important in their bearing upon the issue of world security. For all these measures stand in flat defiance of the League of Nations, to which we are formally committed as the only way of salvation. They present insuperable obstacles to the formation of such a League. For every advocate of the League recognizes that the principle of the Open Door, or of equality of economic opportunities, is essential to peaceable relations between members of a League. All these prohibitions, preferences, priorities, the ear-marking of supplies and markets for one nation or a particular group, are deliberate offences against the fundamentals of the League. When to the distinctively commercial discriminations and barriers we add the new Governmental proposals in this country, to tear up the naturalization papers of persons admitted to British citizenship upon the ground, not of any proved offence or definite suspicion, but because "the continuance of the certificate is not conducive to the public good, and to apply Governmental restrictions upon the emigration from this country so as to direct it into approved channels," we perceive that two utterly divergent and contradictory policies are at grips for the soul of our nation and for the conduct of the world to come. One of them seeks to stamp nationalism and exclusiveness upon our economic policy, reducing to a minimum the interdependence of nations, and maintaining for an indefinite time the war cleavages of the belligerent groups.

The acts and proposals of this policy are not put forth merely as precautionary or hypothetical measures, in case the League fails of realization. They simply ignore the possibility or desirability of such a League, and by doing so present the Militarists of the Central Powers and the enemies of pacific internationalism in every country with the ammunition which they want. It is quite true that, if a League of Nations cannot be strongly founded after the war, measures of National and Allied defence will validate many of the economic measures which are urged by the Committees. For the entire conduct of every nation—economic, political, educational—would, in such event, be delivered over to the war-lords of the nation, and freedom of trade would be submerged with all other personal and civil liberties. But are we to assume that a League based on pacific internationalism is impracticable? Are President Wilson and its important champions in this country and others to be given no chance of a favorable atmosphere? Everyone of these economic measures, adopted or advocated by Governments or their Committees, is simply a vote of no confidence in the League policy, and reacts in a disastrous way upon the faith of the millions who, in these war-racked countries, were beginning to turn their aching eyes to this great project of constructive internationalism as a healing of the nations. The cumulative effect of these announcements of economic war after war upon the mind of our enemies is to stiffen their determination to fight on, while it incites them to make every effort to build up for themselves a separate economic world. And the ensuing economic struggle can only be the prelude to a renewal of the world-war when the opportunity seems favorable to either fragment of a broken and desperate humanity.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

So the Government, which is nominally at least, a unit, is to become a diatom. I doubt whether the changes will stop with the creation of a "Home Affairs Committee," with Sir George Cave as a kind of sub-Premier. That will certainly not satisfy Lord Midleton and the Conservative group from which this movement originally came. Ministers belittle the Home Affairs Committee; but it is really a Cabinet within a Cabinet, and that can only be a centre of friction. Why should Secretaries of State be put under Ministers without portfolio? Why should Sir George Cave serve Mr. Barnes? But the remedy for the confusions of the George Government goes much farther than a proposal for settling the quarrels of Departments. It includes, I am afraid, the removal of the august author of these disturbances. Mr. George is held to be fully responsible for the recent defeats, or at least for the consistent depreciation of the Western Front which preceded them, and neither his mind nor his judgment, neither his handling of the High Command, nor the general character of his administration, are trusted. One section, a powerful and a dangerous one, inclines to a Milner Premiership. Another would like to see a good medium Cabinet, composed of the best personalities in Conservatism, Liberalism, and among the military chiefs. The head of such a combination would be a fairly neutral but representative person, such, for example, as the Speaker, who is powerful as well as popular. No definite political color would attach to such a Government, nor any pre-conceived view of the war or the peace. It would be simply open-minded, moderate, respectable, and safe.

MEANWHILE, the House of Commons has again become critical. It has begun to realize the profligacy of the Government's war-finance, the absence of control, and its own powerlessness to staunch the mortal wound. It might feel a little more for the other wound, through which so much of our best blood has poured. But at least it is becoming alive to its own business. Over seven thousand millions of expenditure, an outlay of 7½ millions a day, a possible after-war Budget of seven, or eight, or even nine hundred millions, a vision of taxation that the country's returning soldiers will not pay, nor its industries support! Anyhow, anywhere, flow the millions; a light-hearted Celt speeds the stream along. The Chancellor indeed is not a Celt, but a Lowland Scot. Yet this over-worked man does practically no real Treasury business, and when he even mentions it, talks of millions as if they were bawbees; while neither he nor his chief has even dreamed of reorganizing his once all-powerful office, so as to dam up at least a channel or two in the general rush to ruin. At present, the Treasury can do nothing. It has long been overborne. There is only one remedy, and that is the direct and unflinching revolt of Parliament. The official Opposition should have backed Major Collins's original motion for a House of Commons Committee, with power to review all expenditure, examine Ministers and officials, and report to the House. Mr. McKenna's speech on Tuesday was at least a warning of how seriously the City (for which he is well qualified to speak) thinks of the financial situation. But it is not enough to speak.

WE are clearly on the eve of the publication of the Montagu Report. I think that the friends of self-government for India, here and there, may look forward to it with hope. Its signature by the Viceroy, and the mere fact of its publication, are important. It will, of course, appear before and not after its adoption by the Cabinet. But the joint Governors of Ind'a, the representative of the King, and the actual director of policy, will then have been its public sponsors, and I do not see any Government with a sense of political values whittling it away. The greater probability is that it will be the minimum rather than the maximum of the actual Reform Bill. The question which everyone who knows the

state of Indian opinion will ask himself is—Will it substantially redeem Mr. Montagu's pledge of responsible government, and if, as one gathers, the powers it confers are to come gradually into force, will the scheme explicitly contain this latent promise of expansion? I think that "Yes" is the answer to both these questions. There will be an electorate. There will inevitably be Provincial Assemblies, with Ministries dependent on them, and majorities composed of native members, and they will have powers of taxation and legislation. Some kind of dualism there will probably be, some reservation of force to the Executive responsible for order. But I think native India will be surprised when she learns how large a measure of trust will be reposed in her representatives. Nor, I imagine, is the Civil Service indisposed, as a whole, to the change which will convert them into joint trustees with native India, prepared to see their share in the estate gradually, but quite definitely, diminishing. The change is undoubtedly large. But I am sure it can neither be avoided nor curtailed.

So the Government has answered again to its master's voice. M. Troelstra is not to have his passport because Lord Northcliffe has said so. M. Troelstra has been called a pro-German. He is, in fact, a neutral and a pacifist, which to Lord Northcliffe's pellucid mind means the same thing. He denounced the German invasion of Belgium, he is for its re-establishment as an independent nation, and his relations with German Socialism are only and barely such as an Internationalist can properly maintain. He is also the most important man in Holland. He has seen Scheidemann and two representatives of Austrian Socialism, and could therefore discharge in the Labor Conference the invaluable function of letting it know what German Socialism wants. In other words, he would have acted as a quite informal link between two great sections of the belligerents, who before the war constituted, with the Catholic Church, the only international force in Europe. That is probably the only way in which peace will come. Therefore, like the Stockholm Conference, it is blocked. Thus do the Governments destroy the peoples. They talk, in secret, and nothing comes of it but more war. The suffering peoples try to talk in the open, so as to know each others' minds, and their mouths are shut.

So it is Mr. Hughes to the rescue again. True, it is rather a reduced version of the magnificent original, a Hughes who may have been "right" or "wrong" in introducing Conscription into Australia, and getting thoroughly beaten on it; but still a perfectly "resolute" and "fearless" Hughes with the Hun, a Hughes bent on winning the war, even against Ministers who do not want to win it quite so much, and a perfect terror of a Hughes to pro-Germans and traitors. All this I learn with pleasure from the "Evening News," without also gathering with exactitude what Lord Northcliffe wants Mr. Hughes to do for us. Not, I hope, to replace the super-Hughes. Or is it Mr. George's demerit with which the "Evening News" is subtly concerned even more than with the surpassing merit of Mr. Hughes? Is he not quite—rather off color—a little falling off, you know—not the real old "Daily Mail" George? I wonder.

THE "Times," I am afraid, has been grievously "spoofed" over the illustrious Dr. Lensch. Anyone moderately acquainted with the personnel of German Socialism could have told it that Dr. Lensch was a person of no importance. "No one ever took him seriously," said a friend of his to me, "not even himself." He was once the editor of the "Leipziger Volkszeitung," but Socialist Leipzig grew discontented with his bourgeois habits and airs. When the war broke out he joined the Left Wing, and in the private meetings of the party voted with the minority for opposing the war credits. Then he oscillated violently to the other side, coming at last to the position (he is of an old Prussian official stock) that Socialism could only establish itself through the triumph of pure Prussianism. Not a man in the party followed him. He was and is a rather brilliant eccentric of the literary type. But his pamphlet is a

good enough text for the Never-Endians of Printing House Square.

THE latest claim of our militarists seems to be not only to deny conscience, but to date it. At all events, it is "presumed," according to the military representative on the Essex Appeal Tribunal, not to exist at the age of eighteen. At that age you may be a divinity student or have entered a University, or been "confirmed" or (I presume) "converted." But you have no conscience, which appears to develop late in life, when there is no special need for it. How, lacking a conscience, you can exercise a moral judgment in favor of war as well as against it, seems a little difficult to understand. In fact, I suppose, that is the military position. You are a child intellectually and morally incapable of reflection, but you are good enough food for powder. The special point of the military gentleman in Essex seems to me that the boy of eighteen who claims a conscientious objection cannot do so because when the war began he was too young to have one, and since then he can have had no special reason for acquiring it. Indeed! Has this war been such a perfect moral spectacle that no young mind can have acquired a rational doubt even as to the general rightness of all wars or of any war? The military representative in Essex seems to think so. But I should say that he is rather a lonely "ethicist."

THERE seem to be a good many "world-conceptions" about, from the Kaiser's and Dr. Lensch's to that of our own Protectionists, all of them apparently agreeing that there can be no possible room in this rather extensive universe for anybody else's. But I confess that the "world-conception" which pleased me most was that of a soldier just returning from the front. He was in a railway carriage, moving through our rich Sussex meadow-land, and his face was glued to the glass. Suddenly, he turned to his comrades in a kind of ecstasy. "Why they're cutting grass!" he said. "Look at them! I should like to cut grass for the rest of my life."

A WAYFARER

## Life and Letters.

### "DISTURBANCE OF OUTLOOK."

IT is rather strange that among the "raw materials" of which Germany has run so short, tobacco should be one. It is strange because, through Bulgaria, she commands the route, not only to Thrace and Asia Minor, but to the regions about Kavalla, where fields of the best tobacco grow; and by crossing the Black Sea either from Odessa or the Bosphorus, she can reach the abundant crops of the wide Transcaucasian valley. We can only suppose that, in devastating mankind, war has devastated tobacco, and that Turks, Greeks, Anatolians, and Georgians have been too much reduced by death and misery to plant and tend the most lucrative of their plains. As to the shortage there is no doubt, for we read that German professors (with less than their usual skill in botanical chemistry) have suggested dried beech-leaves as a substitute for tobacco, and the Government has issued to the Army a mixture chiefly so composed. Our own experimental bureaucracy could not have done worse. For indeed the results were lamentable. Upon soldiers the effects were worse than poison gas, and even the most bellicose members of the Reichstag could not stand them, though they were naturally as anxious as all rulers and Members of Parliament to display military prowess and share all the hardships of war. So German botanists will have to continue their researches, and, as fellow mortals, though not as belligerents, in sheer pity we wish them a qualified success.

Just in passing, we might remind them (though German cigar-makers hardly need reminding) that brown paper, dipped in a solution of 5 per cent. nicotine with boiling water, and carefully dried and rolled, is less deadly than beech-leaves; and the present writer has,

without ill effect, smoked tea-leaves from the leavings in camp-kettles, sunflower-seeds (which Russians perpetually chew and spit), and the unravelled edges of tents (containing a little hasheesh, we suppose, and, at all events, yielding what the soldiers called "a kind of hot taste"). But that was in a time of famine, when a worshipping crowd sat round the staff-officer who possessed the last cigar, and watched him smoke it, as thirsty pagans might have watched a god beside his nectar. These are but passing hints to suffering humanity. What really concerns us now is a deeper, though hardly a more vital, question than the discovery of substitutes.

Commenting upon the failure of beech-leaves, the "Manchester Guardian" lately remarked:—

"It has remained for this war to underline the fact that civilization has reached a stage when certain poisons are beginning to take rank as necessities. Nicotine, hasheesh, and opium are unique in their effect of creating a disturbance of mental outlook. . . . The philosophers and the biologists may be left to deplore a state of the world and of the race in which any artificial improvement of outlook, whether by alcohol or tobacco, should be found necessary by large bodies of men."

Without being philosophers or biologists, we certainly do deplore the state of the world and of the race. Earlier in the war one used to hear frequent stories of the British and German wounded lying out upon the battlefield and soothing each other's anguish with gifts of the opium that some of them carried with the "iron ration." The object was to create "a disturbance of mental outlook"—"an artificial improvement of outlook." Those only who, in the extremity of pain, have known the blessed influence of opium, can realize how beneficent, as indeed of a ministering angel, was that service of man to man. It recalls the sentences at the end of one of De Quincey's chapters:—

"O just, subtle, and mighty opium! that to the hearts of poor and rich alike, for the wounds that will never heal, and for 'the pangs that tempt the spirit to rebel,' bringest an assuaging balm;—eloquent opium, that with thy potent rhetoric stealest away the purposes of wrath, and, to the guilty man, for one night givest back the hopes of his youth, and hands washed pure from blood . . . thou hast the keys of Paradise."

The world is now a battlefield on which the nations of mankind lie in anguish, wounded and bleeding. What would the world not give for some just, subtle, and mighty opium to bring an assuaging balm, and with its potent rhetoric to steal away the purposes of wrath, while giving back the hopes of youth, and hands washed pure from blood! Is it not the prayer of the human race that some such spiritual opium might be discovered, bearing with it the keys of Paradise?

But, downright people who insist upon looking facts in the face will say, opium is a wicked poison, delusive and insidious as pacifism or the latest peace offensive. We also are downright people who insist upon looking facts in the face. The trouble lies in discovering the face of facts. So much depends upon the nature of him who looks at it. "I never saw a sunset like that, Mr. Turner," said the lady before the picture. "No, madam," the painter answered, "but don't you wish you could!" To look facts in the face needs a mind as well as facts, and, for some people, perhaps "a disturbance of mental outlook"—or might we not even say, "an artificial improvement of outlook"?—may be required before the true face of the facts can be seen. And if opium is thought too delusive and insidious a poison, let us consider a disturbing or improving agent of more temperate and mitigated influence. There is tea, for instance. Tea is a poison, and people drink it simply to produce a disturbance, an artificial improvement, of mental outlook. But how beneficent is the disturbance, and how incalculable the improvement! That is known to everyone who has endured the torment of speaking to a drawing-room meeting, and has found the difference between an audience craving for tea and an audience with mental outlook disturbed and artificially improved by drinking it. Not only the face of the facts, but the face of the audience is transformed, and even the most downright person is more likely to

perceive the truth of reality with that poison working upon his brain than he was before.

Of course, we regret that any form of poison, even the mildest, should be necessary. We do not commend, though we understand, the man who told Canon Barnett he got drunk because drink was the shortest way out of Whitechapel. Perhaps it is an open question whether men should be "doped" before they go over the top, or whether condemned prisoners should be drugged as they go to execution. All we contend is that it would not be a bad thing for mankind if some spiritual, or even material, opiate, tobacco, or tea could be discovered which, being widely diffused throughout the world, would exercise a disturbing and improving effect upon the mental outlook. We deplore as much as any philosopher or biologist the state of the world and of the race in which such a means of improvement is found necessary. But there it is. No one can say that the world's mental outlook does not need to be disturbed and improved. All manner of virulent poisons are already at work, and the people who thank God for the war and glory in its continuance are hardly more to be called "normal" than the opium-eater or the pacifist. The poison of war has killed far more men than drink, and has disturbed the mental outlook far more than tobacco. What beneficent drug can we find powerful enough to counteract the spiritual drug which converted a reasonable and kindly people into the howling crowd of credulous mafniacs at the Billing trial? A mental outlook prevailed at that trial which it would be worth a tropical jungle of medicinal poisons to disturb and improve.

It is an assuaging and salutary change of outlook that the human race is crying for. Like King Lear, it calls to the good apothecary for an ounce of civet to sweeten its imagination. Of course, there may be some who have grown so accustomed to stinks that they would object to any sweetening, and comfortable people who have settled down into the ruts of law and order are naturally opposed to mental disturbance. Patriotic Romans in their bland villas beside the Mediterranean denounced Christianity as an insidious poison tending to disintegrate the Army and the Empire. The Tear thought the same of Liberalism; the German Government thinks the same of the Bolsheviks. But, outside Governments and their circles of contractors, there are not many who feel particularly comfortable now, or enjoy the existing aspect of law and order. Now is the chance for some stimulant to improve the mental outlook and change the world by a change of mind. Even the great Rulers of the nations might really be all the better for such a change. And, if that is so, we would grudge them neither poppy nor mandragora nor all the drowsy syrups of the world. They might even try a little hellebore, which is a pleasing antidote to madness. We could only pray that the drugs be quick; and if a certain amount of mild poison were inevitably infused, that would be no great matter.

#### THE NEW STAR.

The record of some mighty event in the vast spaces of the universe has just come to light in the birth of a new star. To measure the distance at which this star was poised before it underwent its extraordinary change were idle. Distances in the standards of stellar space are so great that the imagination ceases to react to their enunciation. They are so great that light with its enormous speed is always years late in its record, and this new star that we see was born and died, perhaps, in the days of Elizabeth, perhaps at the Norman Conquest, perhaps as a sign and seal of the birth of recorded history. Stellar wonders have never been wanting in the greatest days of the world. Halley's comet has earned an undying fame in the Bayeux Tapestry from the fact that it threw its golden miracle across the sky when the Normans were landing in England, and, though shorn a little of its mystery now that we can chart its appearances and point our telescopes at the exact spot in the sky at which it will make its next visit, the beauty of its coming is not

less. It was Halley's comet, again, that men thought to be a portent of the rise of Mahomet II. in 1456; and each seemed the more terrible from the coincidence.

But comets are orderly bodies as compared with new stars. *Nova* or temporary stars appear unexpectedly in the heavens. Their coming is unheralded; their going unmarked. Comets we can predict. We can plot their paths, estimate their velocities, and fathom their problems. The true new star is a thing of a few days, and is more easily noted by the amateur watcher of the skies. *Nova Aquilæ*, the new star of the Eagle Constellation, was discovered by one of those who keep a nightly vigil before the wonder of the stars. It was observed first a fortnight ago, not long before midnight, in Aquila, in that gleaming train of stars which we call the Milky Way, where indeed most new stars are found. The professional astronomer busily intent upon some tiny plot in the sky missed its sudden effulgence, and it became almost at once one of the brightest stars in the sky. Its light seemed to wax and wane, though whether this was a true change or merely the effect of the constant atmospheric currents it is impossible to say. It has been watched carefully since its first appearance. Few stellar phenomena have been so well watched, and its changes and brief history are being pieced together. It flared up during the day of June 8th, and its later changes do not seem to have been so great as these that went on without any watch. But on the night of June 9th it seemed brighter even than Vega.

Even a new star has its history, and since the photographic records have been kept we are able to read a fragment of the history of the stars. In the Algiers Astrographic Chart and Catalogue there is a star, photographed in June, 1895, and August, 1909, with which the new star may agree. It was then a faint star and with a considerable constancy in the three photographs which may show its phases. At present it is impossible to establish the identity of *Nova Aquilæ* with the three photographs, and even if we could do so, we are little nearer to the heart of the problem it raises. There are some who think that a new star is the product of the collision of two others. A third body arises from the collision and flames up only to die down again suddenly. The shortness of the life of a new star is one of the great supports of this theory. Another suggested explanation is that the gaseous envelopes in a partial collision give rise to the brilliant flare, and we know of the existence of these gaseous streams in space. A third hypothesis is that the phenomenon is caused by the rush of a small body through a gaseous mass. But there are objections to all these hypotheses, though it is notable that all agree in attributing the phenomenon to a collision of some sort. Some students even admit the full collision theory when two dead suns under the influence of gravitational attraction rush together at an incredible speed and send their dull surfaces into wild conflagration. But the phenomena are too great and too evanescent to be due to that cause. Such brilliant flares would not be produced in a collision of two great masses, or if produced would be more lasting.

There is a theory of the "canali" of Mars which makes these symmetrical lines due to the gravitational pull of a planet growing nearer and ever nearer, and causing tidal distortions in the Martian Crust. In the case of cooling suns with hot matter in their interiors, some such tidal disturbance as the two bodies approached would act as the release, and in the sudden outward flow of heated vapors we should have phenomena similar to those disturbances which periodically agitate the sun's surface. Needless to say, the scale of such disturbances in these distant and dying suns would be incomparably greater. The surfaces or surface for a short space might vary very considerably with greater and lesser flares until the "sun" died into that cold and inert mass, of which there are probably so many examples in space like the moon, which shines a constant reminder of the evolution of worlds. This sudden and almost instantaneous outburst is borne witness to by the latest weapon of scientific astronomy. The spectroscope shows a fairly reliable and uniform history of new stars. There is evidence of a great outburst of hydrogen in all *nova*. The presence of helium is observed, and finally the stars give the





familiar nebula spectrum. In the case of Nova Persei, which was discovered in the morning of February 22nd, 1901, the life cycle of a nova was followed. Before that time novae had been seen only after their maxima were passed and when they were already on the decline. Nova Persei was found on the lower side of its maxima, and it was followed as it suddenly burst from below the twelfth magnitude to the second in about a day. It first showed the presence of hydrogen and helium; but by July the nebula spectrum was seen. In the following month a vast spiral nebula was observed, to which apparently the Nova had given birth. There is in the Nova this strange approach of the termini of stellar life. Novae are probably dying suns which, under great stress, due to the tidal strains caused by another passing sun, give out these last flickers of life before falling back into that army of spent suns which, from the estimated density of stellar distribution, ought to exist somewhere in space. But these flickers which long afterwards shine to the wonder of watchers upon the earth, go through an evolutionary process that results in a stage having clear and marked resemblance with those glowing nebulae which stand on the threshold of the cosmic process. If this should be the case, we have a picture of a material universe that is always dying and ever becoming. The vast worlds, some without doubt supporting organic life (though whether any have intellectual life we do not know), some glowing suns so large that no life could exist as near them as the earth is to our sun, some cooling suns, are all pursuing a definite course in a majestic evolutionary process. Near to their death they throw off, perhaps, some nebulous matter, reproducing, as it were, by fission. The nebula then starts the life cycle of a star, expanding and then gradually condensing.

Something of this sort it may be we are witnessing now; or rather we see its records now, for the event has long since passed. The parent and original star has long since faded to its primitive suburban quality. This brilliant outburst was but the flicker of a moment. Somewhere perhaps we may have a new meteor shower or may find a hitherto uncharted star that took its rise in that great emission of glowing gas. But this will only be seen when the present age is buried under the dust of centuries. Nova Aquilæ, with its reddish-yellow color, is one of the brightest Novae ever seen, and whatever be the nature of the extraordinary event which produced this effect, we know that its magnitude is of an order to turn this world and its tiny interests and quarrels into an ant-hill on a limitless expanse.

Boccaccio." Well, there is just a whiff of Boccaccio, a name or two, and the pale ghost of his despised and affronted imagination. The play is mechanically composed of two of the finest of the "novels," the story of Frederigo and his falcon, and that of Juliet of Narbonne. Shakespere took the second for his "All's Well that Ends Well," changed Juliet into Helena, humanized and weakened her, and poured his poetic magic into Boccaccio's simpler and more austere conception. Miss Leslie and Mr. Dymock cannot quite destroy its charm. But they namby-pamby it, sentimentalize it, confuse it, and finally roll it up in a bundle with the completely dissimilar Frederigo. Why this maltreatment? The theme of the girl-physician who wooed and won her disdainful husband against his will attracted two masters of literature. Presumably, therefore, it was interesting in itself. Indeed, Juliet, for all her offence to modern taste, is a noble woman. Her aim is no other than the serious conquest of the man on whom she has fixed her heart, a conquest not of his body only but of his mind and soul. That is an exciting spiritual adventure, far above the trickery of the device which Boccaccio, with his medieval fancy, wove into his story. Juliet means her quest of her truant to end in making her

"A mother and a mistress and a friend,  
A phoenix, captain, and an enemy,  
A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign,  
A counsellor, a traitress, and a dear;  
His humble ambition, proud humility,  
His jarring concord, and his discord dulcet,  
His faith, his sweet disaster."

Barely a touch of this seriousness—this high-strung purpose of a woman's soul—appears in "The Loving Heart." Its Blanchefleur has the affectation of the modern stage, its pretty nothingness and grimacing grace. Her husband is half in love with her when he leaves her, so that the story has the stamp of meaninglessness from the beginning. It is not only meaningless; it is out of character. The prolonged flirtation in Florence is not of the fourteenth century at all; its savor is of some sentimental *umour de voyage*. There is a magician, who has a bargain with the devil, and keeps his rendezvous in a costume which seems to be exactly copied from the first comic brigand in "Fra Diavolo," and there is Miss Rosina Filippi, who would be magnificent as a character from Boccaccio if the authors had added a touch of *vraisemblance* with which to play it. Thus our amateurs of the stage turn literature into lollipops, and Boccaccio's savage satire and laughing humanity become pastime for nursery governesses.

Yet with a little art and simplicity of conception the production at the New Theatre might have been a quite admirable innovation. The general idea was wanting; but the setting was without a flaw. Mr. Bridges Adams's Bellini-like dresses and stage pictures were beautiful; they could not have been costly, and yet they yielded a rich decorative effect. The garden in Florence, the chamber of the sick King, were in the right atmosphere; and the bed-hangings, the costumes of the ladies and the courtiers, were painted in with the brush of an artist. But you cannot make an epoch live again by ransacking its wardrobe, any more than you can revive great literature by stripping it of its ideas and retaining only its decorative quality. Then why, having conceived the happy thought of illustrating Boccaccio, should not Mr. Bridges Adams have been empowered to present the pick of his stories—the Griselda, the Frederigo, the Juliet—in the imaginative setting of the original, garden pleasure and all? What an enchanting prologue he might then have contrived, and what a string of pearls he might have hung upon it! I am sure that if they had been asked, Mr. Masefield, or Mr. Nichols, or Mr. Drinkwater, or Mr. de la Mare would have written charming versions of these immortal tales, and Miss Muriel Pratt and Mr. Gill and Mr. Brydone, and (of course) Miss Filippi, would have spoken their verse with distinction. But let us know what we are after when we dip our oars into the mighty stream of imaginative literature.

## The Drama.

### NOT BOCCACCIO.

"The Loving Heart." A Tale of Enchantments from Boccaccio in Four Acts. By Henrietta Leslie and John Dymock. Music by Arthur Somervell. Produced at the New Theatre by W. Bridges Adams.

The King of France	ALFRED BRYDONE
Arnald, Count of Ventadour	BASIL GILL
Blanchefleur	MURIEL PRATT
Flamina	ROSINA FILIPPI

"TELL me a tale," says the child to whom life is one. "Tell us a tale," says the play-going world, "if only to make us forget the horrible thing that life has become." Boccaccio was a famous tale-teller, and the ten young ladies and gentlemen whom he assembled in the palace-garden near Fiesole were refugees from a plague. Now, therefore, that a worse plague than that of Florence holds the pleasant land of Italy, and every land in Christendom through which Boccaccio's stories used to run, there is an obvious inducement to go back to the great *raconteurs*. They cannot indeed close the ear to the dull noise of battle; but they attune it to a finer music.

Yes; but this is precisely what our dramatists cannot do. They simply do not have it in them. The joint authors of "The Loving Heart" prepare us indeed for "a tale of enchantments from

Boccaccio took his party of plague-scared ladies and gentlemen out of the Church of Santa Maria Novella into a kind of fairyland, knee-deep in flowers, as fair and quaint as those in Botticelli's "Spring." But he took the world with him, and his art was the image of his thought about it.

H. W. M.

## Music.

### SCRATCH OPERA.

LAST week my old professional habit of opera-going reasserted itself for a moment. I heard the last two acts of "Don Giovanni" at the Shaftesbury Theatre by the Carl Rosa Company, and the Valkyrie (Hunnishly known as "Die Walküre") at Drury Lane. There was an immense difference between the two performances. One of them might have been an attempt on the part of an opera company, a conductor, and a number of bandsmen, all perfect strangers to one another and accidentally marooned in the Shaftesbury Theatre, to wile away the time by reading at sight a bundle of band parts and vocal scores of a rather difficult opera which they had never heard before by a young and very puzzling composer. The other had been rehearsed to the point of achieving, at its best moments, a superb fulfilment of the composer's intention; and the repeated storms of applause which broke out until the conductor was forced to make several reluctant appearances before the curtain, was not, and could not have been, more generous than he deserved.

And yet they were both scratch performances.

When I was a child I heard certain operas rehearsed by a company of amateurs who, having everything to learn, could not have achieved a performance at all if they had not been coached and trained and rehearsed with a thoroughness impossible in professional music. It would cost too much. These amateurs rehearsed an opera for six months. There were all sorts of weaknesses about their performances; and yet I have never since, even in the course of several years' experience as a professional critic in London, with occasional excursions to Paris, Italy, and the German capitals, heard any performances as perfect, except some of the most thoroughly prepared productions at Bayreuth and Munich. I may be asked whether the brothers De Reszke, playing Gounod's "Faust" for the fifty millionth time at Covent Garden, did not display a tolerable familiarity with that work; and, of course, I cannot deny that they did; but the Valentines and Marguerites and Siebels came and went; and there was always the scratch habit which is so hard to throw off. In the ordinary theatre, where thorough rehearsal is the rule, and the conductor (called the producer) and the company have nothing else to do for six weeks or more than to work at the play, I have sometimes had to deal with an actor whose lot has been cast in theatres where a new play had to be presented every week or even every night. In such actors the scratch habit is an incurable disease. At the first rehearsal they astonish everyone, just as London orchestras always astonish foreign conductors and composers, by being almost letter-perfect, and giving such a capable and promising reading of their parts that one feels that after a fortnight's work they will be magnificent, and leave all the others nowhere. And they never get a step further. The fortnight's work is to them useless, unnecessary, and irritating. Even the letter-perfection vanishes: it deteriorates into appeals to the prompter or appalling improvisations. The same thing occurs with opera singers. You hear a performance of some hackneyed opera by singers who have sung in it hundreds of times. It is never accurate. The individual singers are not so accurate, or even nearly so accurate, as when they performed the part nervously and anxiously for the first time, and were much too young to have found out how little accuracy they could makeshift with. They could no more give such a performance as

Mr. Du Maurier's company at Wyndham's Theatre gives of "Dear Brutus" than a hotel waiter can behave like an old family servant. All experienced travellers have noticed that, however generously they may tip, hotel servants get tired of them if they attempt to reside in the hotel instead of passing on like all the others. There is a hotel psychology, a stock company psychology, and an opera psychology; and all three are modes of the scratch psychology, which is incompatible with thorough excellence.

I sometimes ask myself whether a thorough representation of an opera is worth while. I do not mean commercially: commercially it is impossible under existing conditions. But suppose money were no object, would the final degrees of perfection be worth the trouble they would cost? I go further than merely saying baldly that I think they would. I am strongly of opinion that nothing but superlative excellence in art can excuse a man or woman for being an artist at all. It is not a light thing in a world of drudgery for any citizen to say, "I am not going to do what you others must: I am going to do what I like." I think we are entitled to reply, "Then we shall expect you to do it devilish well, my friend, if we are not to treat you as a rogue and a vagabond." I have a large charity for loose morals: they are often more virtuous than straitlaced ones. But for loose art I have no charity at all. When I hear a fiddler playing *mezzo forte* when his part is marked *pianissimo* or *fortissimo* (as the English orchestral fiddler is apt to do if he can trifile with the conductor), or a trombone player shirking the trouble of phrasing intelligently, I hate him. Yet I could forgive him quite easily for being a bigamist.

The difference between the "Don Giovanni" and the Valkyrie performances was that the Carl Rosa Company had better not have played "Don Giovanni" at all than played it as they did, whereas it would have been a positive national loss to us if we had not had the Beecham performance. I grant that there are extenuating circumstances. Mozart's music is enormously more difficult than Wagner's; and his tragi-comedy is even more so. With Mozart you either hit the bull's-eye or miss; and a miss is as bad as a mile. With Wagner the target is so large and the charge so heavy that if you get the notes out anyhow, you are bound to do some execution. It takes a Coquelin, combined with a first-rate *basso cantante*, to play Leporello; but any heavy-weight bass, with the voice of a wolf, and very little more power of vocal execution, can put up a quite impressive Hunding. Roll Forbes Robertson and Vladimir Rosing into one; and you will have an adequate Don Juan; but which of all the famous Wotans could have touched Don Juan with the tips of his fingers? It is the same with the conducting: what conductor of any talent, with the tradition of Wagner and Richter to prompt him, could fail with the scene between Siegmund and Brynhild in the second act of "Die Walküre," or with the fire music at the close? Try him with the two symphonic scenes in which Don Juan invites the statue to supper, and in which the statue avails himself of the invitation, and he is as likely as not to be hopelessly beaten. Felix Mottl was one of the very best Wagner conductors produced by Bayreuth. I have heard him conduct Mozart's "Nozze di Figaro," "Cosi Fan Tutti," and "Clemenza di Tito" to perfection in Munich. But he was utterly beaten by "Don Giovanni." Senor de la Fuente, the Carl Rosa conductor, when he conducted "Le Nozze di Figaro" last year, handled it brilliantly. It is an easily learnt work: the execution may require exquisite delicacy and immaculate taste; but there is no touch of tragedy in it, nor any touch of passion of the tragic quality. Now, Don Juan is a tragic hero or nothing: his destiny is announced by Mozart from the very first chord of the overture. That the opera is called a *dramma giocosa*, and that there was an early Don Juan who was only a squalid drunkard and libertine, does not weigh against the evidence of the score. Before Shakespear touched Hamlet there was a zany Hamlet who mopped and mowed, and nailed down the courtiers under the arras and set them on fire, going through all the pitiable

antics with which the village idiot amused heartless visitors when he was one of the sights of the village instead of an inmate of the county asylum. Well, Mozart abolished the drunken Don Juan as completely and finally as Shakespear abolished the zany Hamlet. Unfortunately, the operatic conductors and stars do not seem to have found this out. When the singer who impersonates Don Juan happens to be a gentleman, he takes the greatest pains to make himself a cad for the occasion. Leporello's agonies of terror are replaced by silly and ineptly executed buffooneries which the Brothers Griffiths could do, in their proper place, artistically and funny. Everyone, the conductor included, is nosing through the score for the vulgar fun which is not there, and overlooking the tragic and supernatural atmosphere which is there. And the result is that they all feel that the thing is not going: that they are missing instead of hitting. They do not know what is the matter, and yet know that something is the matter. They find the music frightfully difficult; cling with their eyes to the conductor; become rattled and flurried and panic-stricken; until at last their passages sound like nothing at all. The conductor has to keep up an air of assurance, but is secretly almost equally puzzled: you know it by the infirmity of the rhythm. Even the ruthless march of the statue music: a rhythm which no conductor ever misses in the music of Wotan or of Rossini's Moses, dwindles into an irresolute buzzing. For example, the terrible address of the statue, which begins "Tu m'invasti a cena," is preceded by two ominous bars in which this rhythm is thundered through dead vocal silence as emphatically as the opening of Beethoven's symphony in C minor. The conductor must mark this with Handelian conviction and power; for it is quite as necessary to the effect as the more sensational orchestration of the hellish blasts which follow it, and which only a deaf conductor could underrate. But Senor de la Fuente noticed nothing in it but commonplace rum-tum, which he was too worried to attend to. That is only one instance of the sort of thing that went on all through the symphonic numbers, and that always will go on until some conductor will take the work in tragic seriousness; search the score for what Mozart put into it and not for what he made his reputation by leaving out of it; and finally rehearse it hard for a year or so before letting the public in.

He will find other things besides the tragic intensity of the overture and the statue music. He will find that the window trio, "Ah, taci, ingiusto core" is not a comic accompaniment to the unauthorized tomfoolery of Don Juan making a marionette of Leporello, but perhaps the most lovely nocturne in the whole range of musical literature. And he may also be led to the discovery, greatly needed by all English conductors, and apparently by one Spanish one, that six-eight time does not always mean that the piece is a country dance. In German music it often means an *andantino* of intense and noble sentiment.

I must in fairness make it clear that the shortcomings in the Carl Rosa performance were not the fault of the singers. They were asked to perform under scratch conditions a work which has never yet been satisfactorily or even decently performed under such conditions, and never will. At Covent Garden the directors used to throw it over to some *ripieno* conductor to run through once a season as an easy routine job, and were perfectly successful in making it appear worthy of the ignorant contempt with which they were treating it. The Carl Rosa Company at least know it to be an important work; but as they know little else about it except the mere notes, and some of its silliest would-be comic traditions, the result is no better. Why not leave "Don Giovanni" in peace on the shelf? It is so easy not to perform it.

By the way, there was one original point made. Mr. James Pursail is the first Don, as far as I know, to notice that, as Don Juan was not a professional singer, however masterfully he may sing all the dramatic music, he should sing the serenade like an amateur. And this was just what Mr. Pursail did. I do not mean that he sang it badly: on the contrary, he sang it very nicely; and I

do not quarrel with his unauthorized F sharp at the end, because, for a high baritone with an F sharp which is better than his low D, it is a pardonable flourish, and is not in any case a vulgarity like shouting the last note an octave up, with which Mr. Edward Davies discredited an otherwise excellent performance of "Il mio tesoro." I mean that Mr. Pursail sang it, not in the traditionally ardent and accomplished manner, but in the manner of a modest amateur. This is a real new reading which deserves to be noted.

*Die Walküre* was a very different affair. The singers and the conductor knew much more about the work; and the execution was remarkably accurate. And yet the scratch quality came out sometimes just where the accuracy was closest and the skill most perfect. Take, for example, the sword theme. The seven notes of which it consists are all over "*Die Walküre*." They present no difficulty to such wind players as Sir Thomas Beecham commands; and they are scored so as to give them the prominence of a constellation in the orchestral heaven. Well, a lady who is not unfamiliar with the music, made the astounding remark to me that she had detected the sword theme *once*. Before Sir Thomas dismisses that lady as a deaf imbecile, I advise him to engage a mathematician to calculate how many different phrasings can be put upon a seven-note theme. Then let him call a wind rehearsal, and try all the different phrasings. He will be interested to find that whenever the third note is included in a slur, the theme will become unrecognizable as Wagner's sword theme. A single *portamento* in the wrong place will put off any listener who does not know the score. It will veil the star which gives the constellation its characteristic form, and turn it into a mere strip of the milky way. Clearly, in a performance prepared up to the best Bayreuth point, an understanding would be established with all the wind players as to the exact phrasing of this and every other theme. On Saturday night hardly any two wind players gave the same version of it; and the result was that it lost its identity. That is why I reluctantly put this very splendid and valuable revival under the heading of Scratch Opera.

Sir Thomas Beecham was the star of the evening; but the singers ran him close. Miss Agnes Nicholls sang the music of Brynhild beautifully; but I ask how any woman can be expected to look like a Valkyrie, or feel like one, or move like one, in the skirt of an ultra-womanly woman of the period when a female who climbed to the top of an omnibus would have been handed to the police as a disgrace to her sex. If Sir Thomas or anyone else imagines that the situation is saved by adding to the womanly skirt a breastplate and a barmaid's wig of that same period, they err. In 1876, when this ridiculous dress was "made in Germany," it could at least be said that when Brynhild left the theatre in her private character, she wore a long skirt. But before Miss Agnes Nicholls leaves her dressing room for the street she has to put on a short skirt, and to find even that conspicuous for its length in the crowd of knickered chauffeuses and booted and breeched female war workers of all sorts. Why on earth does not Sir Thomas throw all this ragbag rubbish of fifty years ago into the dustbin, and make his Valkyries look like Valkyries and not like Mrs. Leo Hunter? This thing is beyond patience: I pass on.

Fricka I did not hear, because I dined, Bayreuth fashion, between the first and second acts. Miss Miriam Licette did as much with Sieglinde as a soprano with a mezzo soprano part could do against the competition (where there should have been contrast) of Brynhild. Mr. Robert Parker was in a similar difficulty: his bright hard voice is not of the right color for Wotan, "the melancholy Dane" of the modern stage. And he really should not dance at Brynhild as if he were going to kick her unless he seriously reads the part that way. He was more Herod than Wotan; but his articulation was the best in the company, and he put in some fine singing. It would be unreasonable to ask for a richer Siegmund than Mr. Walter Hyde, who was deservedly very popular. The English version, as far as it got across the footlights, was very helpful to the English audience;

but why are the German epithets retained in such passages as "Friedmund darf ich nicht heißen; Frohwalt möcht ich wohl sein: doch Wehwalt muss ich mich nennen"? Polyglot nonsense, I call it. The performance was described in the program as having been "produced." I saw no evidence of the process. The old routine was carried out in all its sacred staleness. The scenery made Old Drury feel young again. Wings, sky-borders, set pieces: nothing was missing. Granville Barker must have chuckled.

The house was crammed from floor to ceiling, and the applause prodigious. This, for a work of which the hero and heroine are within the tables of consanguinity, written and composed by one classed by our patriotic papers as a congenital scoundrel with a specific lust for the blood of women and children, would probably be accounted for by the patriots on the ground that Old Drury, huge as it is, does not hold 47,000 people. I will therefore conclude by mentioning that I never saw a more normal and native British musical audience in my life, or a more enthusiastic one. And now bring along your Dora and hale me to the Tower.

G. B. S.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

SIR.—May I thank you for your leading article last week, especially for its sound guidance on the absolutely crucial point that our present enemies should be invited to come in simultaneously with all others in its formation?

It was with nothing less than dismay that I received from the League of Nations Society, last week, a declaration of policy in which they fall into the very snare against which your wise and timely article warns us, viz., forming a League among the Allies now, and inviting our enemies to come in when we have given them a thorough beating. Could anything be more tactless, and calculated to make Germany unwilling to come in? Such a course would wreck all hope of a successful League of Nations. No, the offer must be to all, and by implication it must be an integral part of the peace settlement.

May I, through your paper, beg all who have joined the League of Nations Society, and share the view of your leading article, to send in an emphatic protest against the fatal error in their recent declaration of policy? It is far too vital a matter to be allowed to go by default or slurred over with weak amiability.—Yours, &c.,

A. W. WHITLEY.

Halifax, Yorks.

### SOME EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS.

SIR.—I have read with interest your article on "The Loom of Youth," under the title: "The Indictment of the Public School," in your issue of May 25th. Will you allow me space in your columns to draw attention to two or three educational experiments being practised in this country to-day which form a striking contrast to the characteristics of "The Public School" as described in that article? You say of "the rigid and conventional" public opinion of the public school, that "It gives no freedom, whilst allowing and condoning license." There are educational experiments being carried on in our midst to-day which seek to give all freedom, whilst condoning no license. It is to these that I would like to call your attention. Unfortunately they leave untouched the children at the top of the social ladder. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be an educational pioneer where his own children are concerned, but criminality and destitution are two gateways through which children can be led to those who are "seeking with wisdom and enthusiasm to raise the level" of our educational ideals.

I place first amongst these The Little Commonwealth, in Dorsetshire, with its presiding genius Mr. Horace Lane. The citizens of The Little Commonwealth are drawn from the ranks of criminals. Their only necessary qualification for entrance into that community is to have broken the law, to have been brought before a Magistrate and condemned as unmanageable by the ordinary authorities of parents or school teachers. Boys and girls are eligible. Their ages are the ages of the ordinary public school, 14 to 18. Yet with such antecedents the system of freedom and no license, which Mr. Lane has encouraged, has answered so well that the public opinion of the citizens of The Little Commonwealth is higher and nobler, and more exacting of self control, than that of the most aristocratic and wealthy public schools in the land.

There are now quite an appreciable number of Montessori day schools for infants which are conducted on the same principle—freedom without license.

I have recently visited a Boarding Montessori home for the children of officers who have been killed in the war or seriously

injured. It has only been opened a few months under the direction of Miss Jane Kenny,\* and holds at present only five little children between the ages of 2 and 6, but it is wholly free from the taint of "institution" ugliness and restriction, and one can rest content that children there will develop physically and mentally in a joyous way.

Those who have read the reports of the four Conferences of the New Ideals in Education at East Runton, Stratford-on-Avon, Oxford, and Bedford College, London, will realize how these ideas of freedom in education are cropping up in many schools, and in many parts of the country. This year this Conference will again take place at Oxford, and a whole day will be devoted to "experiments" of this nature, which have not previously been made known to the public. One of the most interesting of these experiments is to be started in September of this year.

Mr. Norman MacNunn, author of "A Path to Freedom in the School,"† has for five years experimented in child self-teaching and mutual teaching, and he will now be Chief Adviser in a New Community for Boys and Girls, orphans of soldiers who have died for their country.

The Community will be Co-educational, residential, and the children will be taken about the age of 8. They will, it is hoped, stay in the community till they are able to earn their way in the world. It will be founded on principles recognizing the two main directions of healthy mental and moral growth, creation and research. There will be no pre-determined view of the careers the children will adopt, but it is hoped that many of them will become teachers of the new methods from which they have themselves benefited. They will be children with no private means. There will be no class or form teaching in this community. Each individual will be looked upon as a unit, as would be the case with a child living at home. Teachers will be called Advisers—the help in the direction the children want to go. The rooms of study will be called: "The Room of Finding Out" and "The Room of Telling." The practical needs of the members of the Community—gardening, poultry, working clothes making, &c., will all form part of the educational process of the life. The members of the staff who advise and instruct on these practical matters will be on a social equality with the rest of the staff. There will be no servant or master element. The local postmaster, the policeman, the grocer, will be drawn in as valuable lecturers. No fixed curriculum will be drawn up—but two subjects will be thought an essential part of the education, knowledge of the mother tongue and mathematics.

Those who are pledged to help this new experiment believe, in the first place, that it will give the teacher the greatest opportunity he has ever had of exerting "intellectual and moral influence." "Issuing no commands, delivering no ultimata, his lightest hint is a command, a grave look has the weight of an ultimatum." In the second place, they believe that for the taught it will lead to "the finest discipline the world has ever seen."

Mr. MacNunn holds that "there is no analogy whatever between the efforts of partial and of complete freedom." "This is a case," he says, "in which revolution is better than evolution, because even a generous half-measure of liberty neither has a tithe of the disciplinary value of complete liberty, nor is it very closely connected therewith as a matter of practical psychology."

This theory implies a faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which has never been practised before.

Hitherto, says Mr. MacNunn, the outstanding evil of our educational systems has been "waste," "waste of time, waste of energy, waste of character, and waste of opportunity. We have wasted time because we have had either to base our questions on a purely imaginary average boy, or else to individualize them, so that they are largely wasted so far as listeners are concerned. We have wasted energy because we are doing the lion's share of the work, thus depriving the boy of that active participation which he demands as the first condition of showing intelligent interest. We have wasted character for many reasons, but principally because we had little time to encourage original ways of working, and because our discipline, owing to the abnormal inertia of the class, had to be external and based on punishments and rewards. We have wasted opportunity because every boy carries in him the secret of his own mental growth, and we had no means of inducing him to reveal himself."

Those who feel that in the interests of national economy and race development this is an experiment worth supporting, have an opportunity of doing so. The Community is to be started in September: £2,000 are wanted by August—£730 towards this sum has already been promised; £1,300 are still wanted. Are there enough pioneer spirits in the country to raise this sum? Many small contributors would be far more satisfactory than one large one. Yours, &c.,

BETTY BALFOUR.

Fisher's Hill, Woking.

### THE MILITARY SERVICE ACTS.

SIR.—As an advocate with considerable experience of the working of the Military Service Acts, and an adviser of influential Trades Unions, I consider that the thanks of the nation

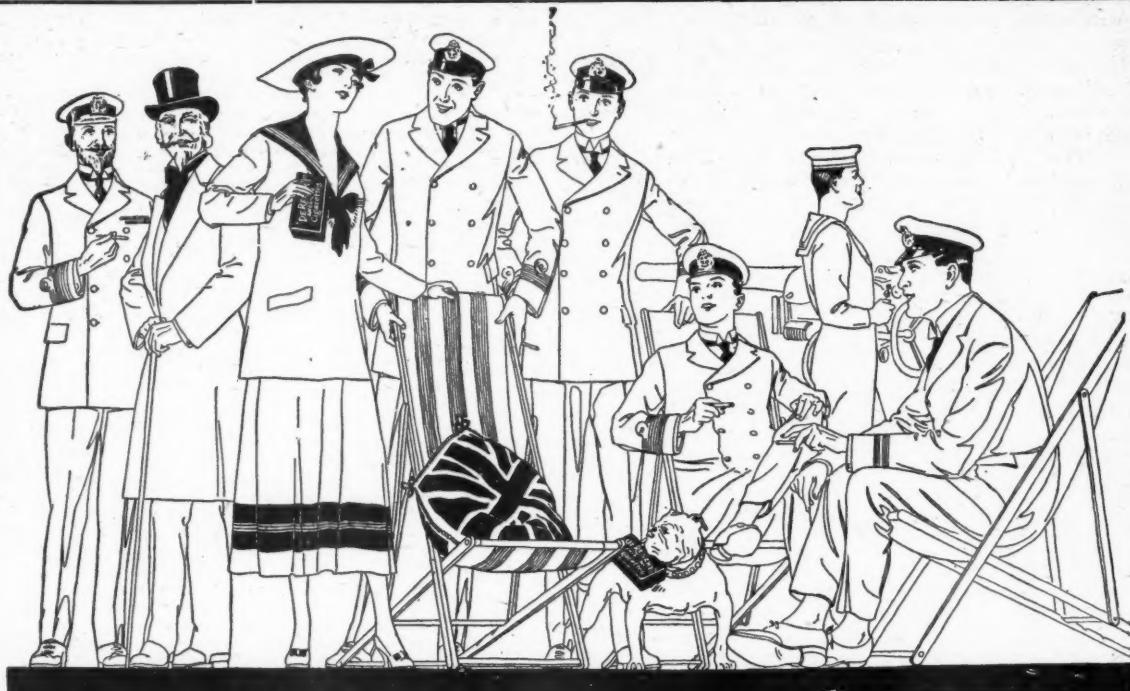
\* Cressy House, Aubrey Road, Campden Hill.

† "A Path to Freedom in the School." By Norman MacNunn, B.A. (London, Bell.)

: Hon. Treas.: Cecil Lubbock, 17, Cranley Gardens, S.W. 7.

**Picture Offer**  
To "De Reszke" Smokers

This picture "Miss America Arrives—She is Entertained by The Senior Service" printed in colours on art paper 15 ins. by 10 ins., will be sent free to any smoker forwarding to address below a "De Reszke" box lid and 4d. in stamps, mentioning Picture No. 57.

*Miss America Arrives**Episode VI. She is Entertained by  
The Senior Service*

"Yes, dear boys, here I am, but don't make a noise about it! You are the Silent Navy, you know."  
"But we do sit up and bark sometimes, Miss America!"  
"I rather guess you do! You may not all be Drakes—but you are all ducks.  
So I've brought you some of Uncle Sam's Best!"

## The 'Grade I' Virginia

WHEN you think of the highest quality in Virginia Cigarettes, the one name that instinctively springs to the mind is "De Reszke" American. For this there is a reason. Ever since the inception of "De Reszke" Cigarettes, the one aim the Manufacturers have had constantly in view has been the production of cigarettes of the first quality—so good that they completely satisfy the discerning smoker. That this ambition has been realised—that the "De Reszke" American is the Aristocrat of Virginias—is evidenced by the numerous letters of appreciation from well-known men and women of to-day, a further selection of which are printed here. Others may be seen in other "De Reszke" advertisements.

**Senator Marconi:**

" Senator Marconi desires to thank you for the 'De Reszke' American Cigarettes, which he smoked and found quite excellent."

**Frederick Austin, Esq. (Principal Baritone, Beecham Opera Company):**

"The 'De Reszke' American Cigarettes are all that you claim for them. They have an unusually pleasant and distinctive flavour, and I am able to enjoy them without experiencing any harmful effect upon the throat."

**H. V. Easmond, Esq., writes:**

"I can honestly say that the 'De Reszke' American Cigarette is the finest cigarette of Virginia tobacco I have ever smoked. I am glad you introduced it to me."

**Owen Nares, Esq., writes:**

"I have invariably found that Virginia Cigarettes proved irritating to the throat, until I tried yours. I can safely say that in flavour, quality, and absence of after effect, the 'De Reszke' American Cigarettes are unique in their excellence."

**"Richard Dehan" (Author of "The Doctor") writes:**

"I have always appreciated the 'De Reszke' Cigarette as one of the finest Turkish blends obtainable. I find in the 'De Reszke' American a flavour and mildness which are calculated to enhance your deservedly high reputation amongst literary and professional people."

**Q** See the personal guarantee of Mr. J. Millhoff, the doyen of all blenders, enclosed in every box of "De Reszke" American Cigarettes.

100
for
7/8

10 for 9½d, 20 for 1/7, 50 for 3/11  
SOLD EVERYWHERE

Or post free from J. Millhoff & Co., Ltd.  
(Dept. 30), 86, Piccadilly, London, W. 1

### MISS AMERICA ARRIVES

VI.

You have swept and kept the seas—  
Sons of Nelson and of Blake,  
Braved the battle and the breeze  
For your grateful country's sake :  
Now in this brief hour of ease,  
When our sole desire's to please—  
Take this little gift of mine—  
Cigarettes—the brand divine!  
  
We who watch and work and wait—  
Kept secure because of you,  
Owe you more than words can state—  
Years won't pay the debt that's due :  
Now in this brief hour when fate,  
Looks to you to guard the gate—  
Take and smoke—with no regrets—  
These "De Reszke" Cigarettes.

J. T. W.

**"De Reszke American CIGARETTES**

25
for
2/-

are due to that small band of public-spirited men, Sir Douglas Maclean, M.P., Sir Herbert Neild, M.P., Mr. Albion H. Richardson, M.P., and Mr. Bettsworth Piggott, each the Chairman of a Tribunal, for their recent utterance and action in connection with the consequences of the last Military Service Act.

It is greatly to be desired that all provincial tribunals should follow the ruling of Sir Donald Maclean, *viz.*, that in the case of men over forty-three years of age, Grade I. should automatically be treated as Grade II., otherwise the principle of uniformity in the administration of the law will be infringed, which can only lead to profound dissatisfaction, if not to ultimate graver consequences.

It is not for the first time in history that a law passed in panic by a subservient Legislature, at the behest of a Dictator (who declared its aims and province to be quite other than those which they ultimately proved to be), has been found to be fraught with injustice; nor that fearless and eminent lawyers in the best interests of the State and of public morality have declined to administer such a law in its strict and cruel letter.

It is a curious speculation that this law in its origin bore one badge of tyranny in common with the most frightful law known to men since the Christian era, and in common with no other law since that era.

Like the law of the 22nd Prairial, it sought to strike away from citizens pleading before the Tribunals on issues which might involve the sacrifice of their lives and fortunes (and the fate of their dependents) the right to the assistance of a skilled advocate; although permitting this to the State which demanded (if necessary) such sacrifice.

It is significant that this monstrous denial of human right was frustrated mainly by the efforts of those very men I have the honor to name in the first paragraph of my letter.—Yours, &c.,

LEX.

#### THE INDICTMENT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. Nevil Wood, speaking of "The Hill," and "Follow Up," says: "here the authors both idealize the old school." I should draw a clear distinction between the two books, though both are favorable to Harrow. "The Hill" avowedly describes exceptional characters and incidents. "Follow Up" is absolutely normal, ordinary, and, in the best sense, commonplace. It does not in the least "idealize" Harrow, and, as a picture of the school, is all the better on that account.—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE W. E. RUSSELL.

#### THE CARE OF THE AMERICAN SOLDIER.

SIR,—Many thousands of American soldiers are now in the fighting lines and in the receiving camps in France, and thousands more are arriving from week to week.

These young "Sammies" have journeyed from 3,000 to 6,000 miles (those from the Pacific coast have had a continent to traverse before embarking) for the purpose of doing their bit, shoulder to shoulder, with the "Tommies" and "Poilus" in the great fight against the Huns.

We know the Americans are properly supplied with the necessities of life, but they are too far from their families to receive the little packages of comforts that help soldiers to feel that they are not entirely cut off from home circles, and that serve to lessen the loneliness of the camp and the trench. Transatlantic mails are now very slow, and we understand that packages have, in any case, been practically prohibited.

The men are not likely to complain, but there is risk that when they see home packages arriving for their British comrades and none for them, they may feel a wee bit homesick. We have had the personal experience of the great pleasure evoked by the receipt of such a parcel by an American officer now fighting in France, and the gratitude expressed in his letter was such as to fill one with the desire to be able to send every man over there a similar parcel.

It is proposed that a committee be instituted to be charged with the duty of collecting funds with which to meet this need, and to keep the American soldier cheered up. "Home parcels" will be made up, to include, of course, only unrationed articles, and these parcels will be distributed, as transportation can be secured, by turns to the men of the different commands. Even if the intervals between the packages must of necessity be considerable, an occasional arrival will save the soldier from the feeling that he has been entirely forgotten.

We ask all who may be interested in the purpose of this appeal (an appeal which is addressed particularly to Americans resident on this side) and who are willing to render any measure of co-operation, to send their names to Lady Walston, Newton Hall, Newton, Cambridge.—Yours, &c.,

FLORENCE WALSTON,  
GEO. HAVEN PUTNAM,  
(late Major U.S. Vols.)

Newton Hall, Newton, Cambridge, June 13th, 1918.

#### MUSIC IN THE VICTORIAN AGE.

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Asquith's recent Romanes Lecture, and to your article ("The Victorian Volcano") in last week's NATION, is it not strange that music, and our national condition as regards that art, do not seem to have

been even mentioned? Does the limitation exclude music and yet include painting, to which your article alludes?—Yours, &c.,

N. KILBURN.

Ninefields, Bishop Auckland.

#### POSTAL RATES ON SOLDIERS.

SIR,—May I ask you to raise your voice in protest against the imposition of higher postal rates upon soldiers writing home? The incidence of this change is particularly cruel, affecting not the well-paid munition worker who can still enjoy the privileges of home and civil life, but rather those of us who are asked to serve in a way that is far more arduous and, at the same time, worse paid. The tax is one which I can assure you that a soldier, who has to live upon his military pay, can ill-afford to meet.—Yours, &c.,

P. BRANDON-JONES.

No. 3' Camp, Blackpool. June 3rd, 1918.

#### THE GERMAN COLONIES

SIR,—A recent cable from London reports Lord Leverhulme, Chairman of Lever Brothers, as representing to the British people that Australia will at any cost insist on the annexation of the German colonies in the Pacific. I do not know whether his Lordship has ever been in Australia, but I do know this—he has no authority to speak for the Australian people. Lever Brothers are large growers of copra in the Polynesian Islands, where they make it a rule to confine their operations to British possessions. The annexation of the German territories would therefore largely extend the scope of their investments. That is not a sufficient reason for prolonging the war at the sacrifice of millions of lives, although the cry for the annexation of German territory in these regions has undoubtedly had that effect. It was one of the most powerful factors in eliminating Russia from the war at a time when, if we had adopted the policy of no annexation and no indemnities, a reasonable peace might have been obtained. As far as Australia is concerned, and I claim to know as much of Australian sentiment as any other man, and a great deal more than Lord Leverhulme has had any opportunity of learning, it is not in favor of seizing any territory on any pretext. We have more tropical territory on our hands than we know what to do with, and in view of the colored labor question our own empty North is becoming a source of serious embarrassment.

The claim that England and her Allies should continue pouring out blood and treasure indefinitely to prevent Germany establishing naval bases near Australian shores is too extreme. England will have to put up with German bases within a few hours' steam of her own coasts. France must tolerate Germany on the other side of a frontier line over which a child could step, yet France and England are asked to sacrifice the last man and the last shilling to ensure by the annexation of these islands that no German flag shall fly within a thousand miles of Australia.—Yours, &c.,

AUSTRALANDER.

#### Poetry.

##### SACRILEGE.

Look well upon this wounded son  
Of earth; this soldier put away:  
His limbs were broken on the wheel  
Of War; his wounds that will not heal  
Have laid him low—unmann'd, undone.

His hand, the carver of the House  
Of beauty, waiting to be built;  
His brain, the little architect;  
His eye, the master to erect  
The Golden City of Green Boughs.

Not very long in this round world,  
Not very long on this old earth  
Of ours, we have to live, to yield  
The hefty tool, to sing and build  
And give our fellow-men their mirth.

Look, then, and see how he doth lie;  
The ruined craftsman, with the quilt,  
Too like a shroud, around his face,  
That tells of youth and boyish grace:  
Gone, and the blessed life-blood spilt.

If he be not the world's saviour,  
If he is not the sword of Peace  
To give young men, his unborn heirs,  
Freedom, what mock the hope he bears,  
What sacrilege those wounds of his!

E. R.

NOTE.—The advertisements of the House are occasionally amusing, often instructive, and always truthful.



*British Warm*

"Rilette's" picture is still apropos of nothing—nothing of the present, for the present has nothing to offer. The future is the only hope for the world—hence the mind wanders.

# POPE & BRADLEY

Sole Proprietor H. Dennis Bradley  
Civil, Military & Naval Tailors.

## THE BARNACLES OF TRADE.

By H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

BUSINESS men are more than a little weary of the steadily increasing battalions of the Bureaucrats and their increasing interference with trade.

Their methods are not constructive but obstructive.

The fatal objections to the Bureaucrats are their ignorance and their inability to grasp the very elements of the system upon which a business can alone become a commercial success, and an asset to the country.

The leading English businesses are patriotic in the highest degree, and are conducting their trade under the greatest difficulties in the best interests of the nation. The revenue of the country—which is one of the chief sinews of war—depends on commerce and on the efforts of the country's business men.

*Who has got to foot Britain's colossal war bill?*

Yet business men are frequently at the mercy of some under-official whose business education and ability are a negligible quantity—possessed of autocratic powers, perfunctory manners, and who can, and does, dictate to them at any time, how to run or mis-run their concern.

Throughout the war the House of Pope & Bradley has kept prices down by dealing in the best open market. It has achieved a record success, and by avoiding profiteering has enhanced its good name.

All it asks—and every business firm asks—is freedom from unnecessary restrictions and interference, and the freedom in open markets, and not in controlled ones.

### MUFTI.

### SERVICE DRESS.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Lounge Suits from	6 6 0	5 15 6
Dinner Suits .....	8 8 0	2 12 6
Overcoats .....	5 5 0	4 4 0

New Naval and Military Kit List on application.

### TWO ESTABLISHMENTS ONLY

14 OLD BOND STREET, W.1  
11-13 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C.

## PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION.

University Constituency, comprising  
BIRMINGHAM, BRISTOL, DURHAM, LEEDS, LIVERPOOL,  
MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD.

## A MEETING OF GRADUATES

WILL BE HELD AT

THE MINERVA CAFE, 144, HIGH HOLBORN

(Second Floor, corner of Bury Street and Silver Street,  
British Museum Tube Station).

On MONDAY, JULY 1st, at 8 p.m.

to consider the formation of an Association for the support of an Independent Candidate with a policy based on democratic co-operation as opposed to rivalry, in both home and foreign affairs.

All information from

Miss M. M. GREEN, 61, Great Ormond Street, London, W.C.1

## PALESTINE JEWS RELIEF FUND

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1915.)

This Fund is for the Relief of Jews in Palestine who are suffering as a result of the War.

They need Food, Clothing, Shelter, and Medical Aid.

There are over 100,000 Jews in distress in the Holy Land, and Help will be greatly welcomed.

Donations Marked "PALESTINE JEWS RELIEF FUND," should be sent to BARCLAYS BANK, LTD., 54, Lombard Street, E.C. 3.

AS SUPPLIED TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

## La Meriel

*The Cigar De Luxe.*

In these days when cigars are so expensive La Meriel at 47/- per 100 will appeal to those who do not wish to pay heavily for their indulgence and yet enjoy the same entrancing charms of Havana. Try a box. We return your money if you are not satisfied. If your tobacconist cannot supply you we will and post paid.

47/- PER 100; 23/6 PER 50.

POST PAID FOR THE TROOPS ABROAD.

36/- PER 100; 18/- PER 50.

SIDNEY PULLINGER, Ltd.

41, Cannon Street, Birmingham.

As  
Illustrated

La Meriel  
DE LUXE

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Letters to the People of India on Responsible Government." By Lionel Curtis. (Macmillan. 3s. 6d. net.)
- "India in Transition." A Study in Political Evolution. By His Highness The Aga Khan. (Philip Lee Warner. 18s. net.)
- "Co-operation in Danish Agriculture." By Harald Faber. (Longmans. 8s. 6d. net.)
- "Twenty." Poems by Stella Benson. (Macmillan. 3s. 6d. net.)

\* \* \*

MR. W. L. GEORGE, who is a writer with not much cause for complaint because of the attention he has received, points out in his latest book ("A Novelist on Novelists," Collins) that there is only one author who has the Order of Merit, while four admirals have been honored with it; and, worse still, if a funkey were announcing the guests arriving at a fine affair—Lord Curzon!—Mr. Joseph Conrad—the Bishop of London!—it would not be the name of the artist which would instantly switch all eyes to one place.

\* \* \*

I do not suppose it would. And it is probable the funkey may never get that chance. Such affairs are rarely distinguished by such guests. They have a sadder appreciation of time's value than to spend any for the glory of appearing (just one ecstatic moment!) in the same doorway as Lord Curzon. And what is the O.M.? Who wants it? What light does it add to Thomas Hardy's nimbus? We know where he is in our minds; and he knows it. Knowledge of such a regard should be enough for any man, though the funkey tolled his identity less impressively in such a place than the Bishop's.

\* \* \*

WRITERS, however humble and unknown, ought to have a more sensitive appreciation of the dignity of their work (never mind their own blessed reputations) than to be made ironic, or even surprised, because, unless they murder somebody or perform a spectacular elopement, local reporters think less of them than of admirals, generals, and bishops. It is right that the reporters should sort out the latter as the grandes; for that is what they are. Any bright lad could become one of them, with a fair start, a few friends, and sufficient days. We all understand that, and so look at the fully decorated and grizzled accomplishment, or the shovel-hat and gaiters, as we regard an industrious neighbor's successful potato plot, or the man who spotted the Derby winner. It is a healthy human instinct to show the greater interest in the success we might have had ourselves with more luck or more industry. It is not likely we are going to make a fuss over what is intangible and questionable, like the reputation of an artist; for no order of merit will give, or ought to give, any public status to that man. In a sense, he was put apart from our community at birth; and except for those occasions when he breaks in uninvited to surprise us with his dreams, there he will have to stop. That is the penalty he must pay for his gift, and I think he should be glad to do it, as anyone should be glad to accept the disadvantages of that task he would rather have than any other.

\* \* \*

MR. GEORGE's is an engaging book, for sometimes he gives his words unusual slants, or he annoys us with a versatile appreciation of books and authors we do not know, or wish we did not; or he tells us that Shakespeare is a prose-writer gone astray. Now and then his rapid display of talent and knowledge does make one think he has scored off his readers, as when he tells us that out of a total of

£320,000 met by our civil list, literature, painting, science, and research divide only £1,200.

\* \* \*

THAT certainly makes a people look mean which rewards the present Lord Nelson with £5,000 a year because of his name. But the strangeness of it is no more curious than the opinion which punishes a man for cruelty to a horse and accepts the sacrifice of thousands of babies every year to speed the making of money without losing a wink of sleep or doubting a moment during its Sunday devotions. There is no point in making these contrasts, or it could be shown that while Bertrand Russell is doing six months for a foolish remark of a dozen words which few overheard, the military expert who hindered us in defeating the enemy by ordering the spending of £500,000 and the labor of 3,000 men to make an aerodrome where planes could not fly, and if they did could not land again, is, for all we know, free to get on with the war elsewhere in a similar way. There is no point in seriously contrasting these things, because we are just like that. It would not be this world if we were not, but another world altogether different, in which Gulliver could have made no such travels, Butler could not have discovered Erewhon, and Mr. W. L. George would have been hard put to it to make his book its present length.

\* \* \*

THERE is only one cure for it. We must be sent back to our Maker for recasting, on the off-chance of a better mould. There is no other way. Why, even the elements (useless for us to admonish them for their stupidity) fill our fruit-trees with splendid promise just before they fill them with caterpillars. Gulliver was only like the sulphate of lead we give to the caterpillars. These are the unconscious reflexes of an imperfect design trying to keep a balance; and perhaps if ever the mysterious design attains and keeps a perfect balance, that will be the time when at last this earth offers to its sister planets the vacant face which now the moon turns to us. The tides of life will have stopped. The present variety is much more enjoyable. It keeps one alert, though sometimes frightened and horrified, or filled with indignation.

\* \* \*

MR. GEORGE has made the sad discovery, too—the first hard lesson of every artist—that "one will never be as popular as Beecham's pills." The unpleasant feature of that lesson is that some writers very nearly are as popular. But if such workers place their product on the level of patent medicines—advertisements, testimonials, and all—disfiguring the hoardings, why mention it in a book dealing with serious novelists? They deserve any public decoration they receive. The highest decoration serves them right. But they have no more to do with the case than the Licensed Victuallers' Association. Possibly it is because writers like Mr. George, when rebuking the public for its immature intelligence, use such tropes and references, that he is compelled to admit the modern novelist "in search of dignity and status . . . has taken to journalism. Journalism raises a novelist's status . . . because the newspaper is labelled as serious, while the novel is labelled as frivolous." That bears at least a faint likeness to nonsense! Which newspaper? Which novelist? We should rather like to meet the man who could increase his dignity by riding in public with his face to the tail of an ass.

\* \* \*

YET what sort of dignity and status is it a novelist should require (I am not a novelist, but would like to hear) if he is so weak as to put the question to himself at all? What has the mayor of his town to do with him except to assess his rates and get his house numbered? Mr. George seems to set himself an intricate problem, puzzling out in what order of precedence the artist should be associated with bishops, grocers, soldiers, and other meritorious citizens, all in due regard to his popularity, dignity, and status. If there is any answer, the artist who knows his job and his place does not want to hear it. It cannot interest him. He never thinks of his public at all. He forces his public to think of him (hardly aware of its existence when at work), and the approval of some competent and candid friends is the only award of merit he is glad to get.

H. M. T.





## Mr. T. FISHER UNWIN'S BOOKS.

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## Reviews.

## VERY SHORT STORIES.

"*Trivia.*" By LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH. (Constable. 4s. 6d. net.)

Few people believe that brevity is the soul either of wit or of wisdom. It is easier to make a reputation by writing a dull long novel than a brilliant short story. Publishers are more likely to commission a two-volume biography than a volume of biographical studies as brief as Plutarch's. The poet who attempts an epic or a play is more sure to be talked about, if not any more sure to be read, than the poet whose lyrics never turn the page. Compared with the treatise, the essay is scorned, and the epigrammatist who shepherds the wisdom of a generation into a sentence is regarded as less of a Solomon than Sir George Cave. Posterity is luckily neither a publisher nor a subscriber to the libraries. Posterity may not read books, but at least it crowns them with immortality, and posterity is no respecter of long-windedness. It rejoices more over an epigram by La Rochefoucauld or a thought by Pascal than over the complete works of Jonathan Edwards. It prizes an ode on a drowned cat by Gray more highly than all the *Four Seasons* by Thomson, or all the *Pleasures of the Imagination* as drawn out by Akenside. Length is not one of the virtues of literature. Which of Samuel Butler's books is more certain of immortality than the "*Note-books*?"

Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith is one of those authors who take the risk of never writing ten sentences where one will do. If he could scribble his philosophy of the universe on the nail of his little finger, he would never dream of scrawling it over twelve-and-sixpence worth of paper. Not that his brief ejaculations in "*Trivia*" are in the nature of philosophy. Rather they are expressions of the bewilderment of a puzzled animal sent spinning through space on a puzzling planet. Mr. Pearsall Smith is one of those human beings who realize that things are not what they seem, and that institutions and vicars, and everything in the world that appear most settled or statuesque, are rocking through space on an inexplicable star and that against the dark and phantasmagoric background of eternity they seem more foolish than music-hall jokes and more ridiculous than mice posing as oracles. To him the supreme jest is the satisfaction of comfortable people with platitudes. He utters a scream, half of pain and half of joy, as he hears a "carnivorous mammal" very much like himself holding forth on life, as though it were a theme for sententiousness rather than an interval of mad adventure. He is never tired of ridiculing this oracular folly of man, as in the one-sentence sketch called "*The Church*":—

"'For the Pen,' said the Vicar; and in the sententious pause that followed, I felt that I would offer any gifts of gold to avert or postpone the solemn, inevitable, and yet, as it seemed to me, perfectly appalling statement that 'the Pen is mightier than the Sword.'"

In "*Lord Arden*" he sets down at greater length and with exquisite wit the dramatic conflict between the conventional platitudes of a man's mouth and the wild and secret impulses of a man's heart:—

"'If I were Lord Arden,' said the Vicar, 'I should shut up that great House; it's too big. What can a young unmarried man . . . ?'

"'If I were Lord Arden,' said the Vicar's wife (and Mrs. La Mountain's tone showed how much she disapproved of that young nobleman), 'if I were Lord Arden, I should live there and do my duty to my tenants and neighbors.'

"'If I were Lord Arden,' I said; but then it flashed vividly into my mind, suppose I really were this opulent young Lord. I quite forgot to whom I was talking; my memory was occupied with the names of people who had been famous for their enormous pleasures; who had filled their palaces with guilty revels, and built Pyramids, Obelisks, and half-acre Tombs, to soothe their Pride. My mind kindled at the thought of these Audacities. 'If I were Lord Arden!' I shouted. . . ."

There was, we fancy, never a more mischievous sprite let loose in a vicarage than Mr. Pearsall Smith. Always we find the Vicar speaking by rule, and always we find a Mr. Pearsall Smith standing behind him like a lawless caricature straight from the world of reality. "The Age, the Vicar would remark, was a serious one; Englishmen were met face to face with complex questions." At once Mr. Pearsall Smith puts the observation to the test of

experience and recalls some of the complexities that occupy his own thoughts:—

"Sometimes it was merely names that filled my mind: Magalat, Galgalat, Saraim, I syllabled to myself; were these the names of the Magi of the East; or Atos, Satos, Paratoras? What were the names of the nymphs Actaeon saw bathing with Diana? The names of the hounds that hunted to his death that rash intruder; Ladon, Harpyia, Laelaps, Orestrophos, as some call them; or, as they are given in other authentic books, Boreas, Omelampus, Agreus, Aretusa, Gorgo?"

That is a comic comment far nearer reality than any thought that had stirred the Vicar's brain. It is futile for the moralizers to lay down a bed of cotton-wool eloquence for a man so aware of his vertiginous adventures in space as Mr. Pearsall Smith. His own most deep-rooted conviction is the conviction that life is largely vertigo, as we see in one of his sudden outbursts:—

"No! I don't like it; I can't approve of it; I have always thought it most regrettable that serious and ethical Thinkers like ourselves should go scuttling through space in this undignified manner. Is it seemly that I, at my age, should be hurled with my books and dictionaries and bed-clothes and hot-water bottle, across the sky at the unthinkable rate of nineteen miles a second? As I say, I don't at all like it. This universe of Copernican whirligigs makes me a little giddy."

"That God should spend His eternity—which might be so much better employed—in spinning endless Solar Systems, and skylarking, like a great child, with tops and teetotums—is not this a serious scandal? I wonder what all our circumspect Monotheists really do think of it?"

Not that even the starry and lunar spaces entirely awe Mr. Pearsall Smith. He is a satirist who is continually shocked by the relations between eternity and his hot-water bottle. He is conscious at once of the immense and the infinitesimal in his own breast or brain, and he is content to behold the endless contradiction between the ego and the universe, and to throw out occasional short interruptions of mockery and admiration. How much human nature he crowds into the two paragraphs called "Providence":—

"But God sees me; He knows my beautiful nature, and how pure I keep amid all sorts of quite horrible temptations. And that is why, as I feel in my bones, there is a special Providence watching over me; an Angel sent expressly from heaven to guide my footsteps from harm. For I never trip up or fall downstairs like other people; I am not run over by cabs and 'buses at street crossings; in the worst wind my hat never blows off."

"And if ever any of the great cosmic processes or powers threaten me, I believe that God sees it: 'Stop it!' He shouts from His ineffable Throne, 'Don't you touch my Chosen One, my Pet Lamb, my Beloved. Leave him alone, I can tell you!'"

It may be that there is wisdom, as well as egoism, in the human instinct which gives the individual man so large and benevolent a picture of his own destiny. But how finely Mr. Pearsall Smith has extracted the comedy of the situation! His book is a modern "*Vanity of vanities*."

At the same time, he is no reformer by good examples, no reader of the lessons of the Universe, as we find when he obeys for the nonce the ethical commonplace and seeks instruction in industriousness from the bees. At the end of some idle hours spent in watching the bees at their labors, he cannot help reflecting:—

"And yet, hang it all, who by rights should be the teacher and who the learners? For those peevish, over-toiled, utilitarian insects, was there no lesson to be derived from the spectacle of Me! Gazing out at me with myriad eyes from their joyless factories, might they not learn at last—might I not finally teach them—a wiser and more generous-hearted way to improve the shining hours?"

The author's ultimate vision of his place in the universe, however, is not as a model to the bees or to any other creature. He sees himself simply as a helpless and comic figure. He ends not as the inhabitant of a star, but as a man with an umbrella. He has had his daring thoughts, his denials, and his adventures, and they have all abandoned him to the trivial round of common experience. The last chapter of the story of his life is called, "*Under an Umbrella*":—

"From under the roof of my umbrella I saw the washed pavement lapsing beneath my feet, the news-posters lying smeared with dirt at the crossings, the tracks of the 'buses in the liquid mud. On I went through this dreary world of wetness. And through how many rains and years shall I still hurry down wet streets—middle-aged, and then, perhaps, very old? And on what errands?"

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Now, Mr. Bell is a perverse kind of creature, and we can quite understand why unfriendly critics brandish their pens at him. "Potboilers" is a motley of notices of picture-galleries, discussions of contemporary art in England, reviews of books on Ibsen, Peacock, Boswell, William Morris, and others, one or two dramatic criticisms, and other higgledy-piggledy material. We had almost said higgledy-piggledy mind, for while Mr. Bell, with his faun-like air, would gibe at us, should we so much as mention the word "consistent," there is no great harm done by being coherent. We say this with the full consciousness that Mr. Bell, should he ever read this notice, may very likely exclaim—"This fellow lives in Tooting." But let us begin by having a few smacks at him too: for his Oh God, oh Montreal! attitude makes him fair game. He starts off, in fact, by a real howler. What does a man of his remarkable ability mean by calling Montaigne "the ideal Man-in-the-Street"? The "Man-in-the-Street" is the personified embodiment of the mass-mind. He is a convenient symbol for a mentality which does not faithfully represent the individual mind, which is not the collective result of an aggregate number of single minds, which, in fact, does not live and think and feel for itself, because it has no independent existence. It responds like a sleep-walker to a distant hypnotic suggestion. The Man-in-the-Street is a kind of incarnated headline; so that he does not even talk, he rustles like the leaves of a newspaper. And this is the being to whom Mr. Bell compares the prime example of detached personality in literature! Then again, in an article on Morris, he says that Morris was "provincial and amateurish," as in Victorian art, "Swinburne and Whistler were not." Morris "was not serious enough about his art. He tended to regard art as part of life, instead of regarding life as a means to art." Such criticism is not only incoherent; it is completely unintelligible. Must Mr. Bell force us by such metallic whimsies to waste space—our exiguous space—in pointing out that Morris was so serious about his art that he so passionately regarded life as a means to art, that he devoted years of it to preaching the ideal of national life as a community of working artists?

Indeed, one is inclined to question Mr. Bell's easy assumptions about art throughout this book. No doubt he

throws them off, with his former challenging book in mind. But he cannot quite expect us to treat this one as a sequel to it and therefore to accept the fragmentary dogmas which are pitted all over "Potboilers" in the spirit that the Scotch accepted Calvinism. "No man can be at once a protestant (with a small 'p') and an artist"; "the painter's job is to create significant form, and not to bother about whether it will please people or shock them"; "the discussion of such interesting matters as Love, Death, Life, and 'The grand for ever'" (the painter Marchand) leaves to the literary gentlemen. He has nothing to say about Man's place in the Universe or even in Camden Town. It is in combinations of lines and colors that he deals, and, as you may see, he has already produced some of extraordinary subtlety and significance; "it is no part of an artist's business to straighten out the contortions of humanity, 'the loss of hue to river-banks,' observed Ch'eng Hao, the Sing poet, 'is the river-bank's affair.'" But a theory of art which leaves humanity out of it (not to speak of such trivialities as "Love, Death, and Life") seems to us as dreary as the "Morning Post." It is people like Mr. Bell (with his great talents he ought to know better) who perpetuate the evil he casts in our teeth—that we, as a people, care nothing about art. How can we or all mankind be expected to care about art, if art cares nothing about us? Whatever must he think of Millet and Rembrandt? Are they *vieux jeu*? Indeed, were we inclined to cry a Roland for Mr. Bell's Oliver, we should say that this conception of art reminds us of a select committee of super-intellectuals enjoying aesthetic thrills. But we are not so inclined, for we recognize, behind a good deal of *blague*, an acute mind expressing a number of very good things—which are not quite good enough to be wise.

We hasten to assure Mr. MacCarthy that we have not hustled him into a confined space at the end out of disrespect for a book which seems to us by its special qualities to be next to perfect journalism. By perfect journalism we mean that "Remnants," by its freedom from self-consciousness, by its lightness of treatment, dexterity of manner, and sureness of touch has mastered the art of saying in two thousand words what might have been said in twenty. What makes Mr. MacCarthy so refreshing to a reader is, in the first place, because, by ignoring his own personality, he at the same time expresses it, however topical, however slight his themes, and, in the second, by his expert (in the best sense) knowledge of his material. His little sketches, be they of art dealers, of Voltaire, of Meredith, of Miss Ethel Levey, of Dan Leno, of lion tamers, of little urbane, semi-satirical fantasies of his own, have none of the portentousness of the essay and not a touch of the finger-wagging skittishness of "semi-detached" journalism. We like Mr. MacCarthy, even when we do not agree with him, because he has a serious mind; we like him still better because, by his aptitude for and serious attention to his art, he expresses that mind with such ease and fluency. It all comes back to the materials. A writer who can really build himself upon them can express his feelings and convictions about life, be his subject-matter *tsotsi-flees*. We quote the following merely as an example of a jolly thrust. He is speaking of sportsmen:—

"Look at him as he is photographed in his sun helmet, his sandwich box slung around him, posing for us in the public prints as an Horatius Cocles, arms crossed, his foot upon the neck of one of a row of glorious beasts, each possessing a hundred times more beauty every hour of the day than he could create in a lifetime. Who can walk up the stairs of one of our big clubs, past the hundreds of horns of lovely and harmless creatures, now being exterminated in every quarter of the earth merely to give young men (and old, let us say) healthy exercise and distraction, without whispering a wish to the propitious heavens that every married man among them may be horned himself before he dies?"

That is the way to write.

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## WOMEN AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

Messrs. Headley Bros. Publishers, will publish next week, under the title of *Women and the Labour Party*, a volume dealing with various questions specially affecting women. The book is edited by Dr. Marion Phillips, who contributes the introduction, and has a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P., the articles being written by Mrs. Sidney Webb, Miss Mary Macarthur, Mrs. Bruce Glasier, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Miss Llewelyn Davies, Miss Margaret Macmillan, Miss Mary Longman, Miss Rebecca West, Mrs. Sanderson Furniss and Miss Susan Lawrence.

The aim of this volume is to show what the Labour Party means to the new women voters. The price of the book is 1s., and it is uniform with *The Aims of Labour*, which was published at the beginning of the year, and which is now in its third edition.

Headley Bros. Publishers also announce the publication of a new play, *The Sword of Justice*, by Eva Gore-Booth. The play turns on the clash between militarist and pacifist ideals.

"Can you wipe out a bloodstain by pouring more blood on it? . . . I say you must have something different. . . . The justice that is the will of God is the balance of mercy with mercy." 1s. 6d. net. Headley Bros. Publishers, Ltd., 72, Oxford Street, W.1.

Chris's mental derangement is a legitimate device for unfolding the thesis that his "normal" life of worldly prosperity with Kitty is but an impressive husk in comparison with the submerged, spiritual passion of his old self for Margaret Allington, the daughter of a humble Thames-side innkeeper. All the "essential self," and the spiritual flame of Chris's life, is centred in those magical days on Monkey Island, fifteen years back, when he and Margaret knew the ecstasy of first love in their fresh, confident youth. But a lovers' quarrel, through Chris's baseless jealousy, and a series of stupid accidents, took Margaret from Chris's life, and he has gone along the high-road of business success to the possession of Baldry Court and his egotistical fashionable wife. Whereas Margaret is "dreadfully married" to Mr. Grey, an apology for a man, and lives in a squalid "red brick box" in Wealdstone, struggling with household cares. We gather all this in the early chapters on Chris's return from France to Baldry Court, where Kitty and her chronicler, his friend Jenny, watch with lynx-like eyes poor Chris's strange happiness, in his obsession for the faded, dingy, middle-aged woman, Margaret, whom he sees with the heart and eyes of his vanished youth.

It was necessary, we suppose, if Miss West is to impress a British audience, that she should rub in on every page the contrast between the exquisite setting of Baldry Court and the soulless Kitty's loveliness, and the cheap stays, muddy boots, black-thread gloves, and impossible hat of the spiritually shining Margaret. One is not quite sure whether "the grime and squalid living" shown in Margaret's "seamed red hand" is meant to satirize our faith in the Rolls-Royce, the oak-paneling, the white fire of Kitty's jewels, and all such appurtenances of the "perfect life." The insistent underlining of the picture rather cheapens the effect of the struggle for Chris's future between the unconscious Margaret and the hard, jealous Kitty. Is Chris to be "cured," to become normal and return to the superficial, sensible life of Baldry Court and the loveless embraces of the small-souled Kitty? Or is he to continue in the dreamy ecstasy of his illusion, in the satisfaction of his "essential self" with the magic of resurrected love? Miss West leaves us at the end of her fine, closing chapter—a chapter beautifully written and much the strongest in the book—face to face with a spiritual dilemma. Margaret decides to sacrifice her own happiness and to recall Chris from his hallucination by showing him the toys of his dead child. Of course, as a woman she would put him to the test, and, of course, the narrator would moralize about "the trivial toy of happiness" and the necessity of knowing the reality. And the last glimpse we have of Chris, as he returns from the interview, is of a man "cured" and "every inch a soldier." But we are not so sure as the women seem to be that Margaret, shabby, faded, middle-aged, will drop out of Chris's life now that she has come into it again. Women always think that a man can be moulded or patted into this or that shape if properly handled. But children often prefer their old toys.

#### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"Pictures of War in America." By JOSEPH PENNELL. (Lippincott. 9s. net.)

It will be useless for Americans to tell us, in vehement self-depreciation, that they are not building ships or aeroplanes now we have these fine lithographs by Joseph Pennell. That famous artist, invited into the shrine of the War God, went there rebellious, contemptuous, and defiant (and for that matter came out again feeling worse than ever about it); but those who have admired that artist's drawings of the Panama Canal in construction will know how the monstrous suggestion that great machines and structures give of being sentient and dominant, though enigmatic, while men minister to them as busy ants, has a fascination for Joseph Pennell. He does not worship the Brute God, but he well portrays it and the ministering slaves who created it. This excellently-produced volume of masterly drawings of America's terrible gun and munition factories and shipbuilding-yards both daunts and satisfies. It leaves no doubt as to what America is doing. And the artist's introduction to his work is alone worth the money.

#### The Week in the City.

STOCK EXCHANGE securities during the past week show few movements of importance, and there has been very little business. The pause on the Western Front cannot be interpreted as more than a pause in the light of Mr. Bonar Law's speech. Italians are rather weaker, although there is a general hope that the great Austrian offensive will be repelled. Consols have been steady and still stand above 56, and most Railway issues have been rather firmer. On Wednesday afternoon there was a transaction in French Fives at 76 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Money has been in some demand with 3 per cent. as the usual rate for short loans, and the tendency of the Discount Market is towards higher quotations. The rate for three months' bills is from 3 7-16 to 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Mr. Bonar Law's statement on the Vote of Credit indicates the rapid growth of war debt, which will involve another serious increase in the income-tax next year. A set-back in War Bonds sales to 21 millions last week is somewhat disappointing, and is attributed by a financial correspondent of the "Westminster Gazette" to the "profound dissatisfaction" felt by investors at the profligacy of the spending departments and the failure to punish those responsible for "criminal waste in money, material, and men's lives." It is certainly disappointing to find that the Government offers no prospects of financial reform. The warnings of Mr. McKenna and Mr. Bowles go quite unheeded.

#### BLEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

In the early days of the war the Bleachers' Association was rather badly hit by the difficulty in obtaining essential supplies, and net profits which for the year 1913-14 amounted to £423,000 fell to £198,000 in 1914-15, the Ordinary dividend being reduced from 6 to 3 per cent. In the following year, however, there was a striking recovery, and an improvement has been shown in each of the two succeeding years. A summary of the company's financial history since the year ended March 31st, 1912, is shown below:—

	Net Prof. £	Pref. Div. £	Ord. Div. %	Reserve in Carry Account. £	Inc. or Dec. Forward. £
1912	371,600	126,700	114,500	5	125,000
1913	435,900	131,000	137,300	6	125,000
1914	423,400	131,500	138,300	6	125,000
1915	197,800	135,000	70,100	3	50,000
1916	416,400	136,000	141,000	8	65,800
1917	515,600	136,000	176,200	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	130,000
1918	527,700	136,000	176,200	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	130,000

Trading profit for the year ended March 31st last, after allowing £251,000 for repairs and maintenance (as against £219,400 in the previous year) amounted to £826,730, an increase of £32,000. The distribution of profits for the past year is the same as in the previous year, £100,000 going to reserve and £30,000 to fire insurance fund, while the dividend of 6 per cent. and bonus of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the Ordinary shares are maintained. The balance carried over is increased by £85,400 to £349,100.

#### RECENT NITRATE RESULTS.

Although the results disclosed by those nitrate companies who present their reports in the spring and summer have on the whole been quite satisfactory, three companies whose reports have been published quite recently have made quite a poor showing. This is due chiefly to the large rise in working expenses, which occurred in the second half of last year, and companies which had sold forward were unable fully to benefit from the equally large increase in selling prices which took place at the same time. The three companies referred to are the Santa Rita, whose net earnings were £6,800, as against £15,000 for 1916; the San Sebastian, which showed a profit of £7,000, as against £30,200, and the San Patricio, which recorded a loss of £7,200, as compared with a profit of £7,300. The outlook for the current year, however, is more promising.

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### CHANNEL TUNNEL COMPANY LTD.

AN ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of this Company was held at the Cannon Street Hotel, Baron Emile Beaumont d'Erlanger, the Chairman, presiding.

The Secretary (Mr. R. D. Heckels) having read the auditors' report,

The Chairman said:—Ladies and gentlemen,—I took it that it was your pleasure to dispense with the reading of the notice convening the meeting, which is not necessary. Before moving the adoption of the report and accounts, which call for no special remark, I should like to address a few words to you. The characteristics of a nation are the sum total of the idiosyncrasies of its citizens. The bulldog tenacity of the British nation pulled it through the seventeen years' struggle of the last century and carried it to ultimate victory. Let us be hopeful and confident that, fighting to-day side by side with the heroic French nation, our fundamental quality will achieve the same result and in a lesser time. The steadfastness of purpose of the British citizen is displayed in civil life as well as in the pursuits of war, and the victories of peace are achieved by the same unwavering purpose of mind. No more striking example of British bulldog tenacity in civil life has been given than by that small group of men who, for some fifty years, have made the construction of the Channel Tunnel their battle-cry, and who have succeeded in enlisting the majority of the nation and the very élite of its thinkers under their banner. This is no time for discouragement; we must not swerve from our set purpose. Peace will rise upon this world again, and with it the day of the construction of the Channel Tunnel will dawn. I have much pleasure in formally moving the adoption of the report and accounts.

Mr. George Howard seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Etherington said he was sure that in connection with this great undertaking, which ought to have been carried out fifteen or twenty years ago, there had been no harder work than was now coming before the company, and it needed an able and competent board of directors, such as they had in the present board—who required all the support and encouragement the shareholders could give them—to carry out this important project in a most substantial and efficient manner for the benefit of the French people and ourselves in this country.

On the motion of Mr. Walford, seconded by Mr. Iggleston, a vote of thanks was passed to the chairman and the directors.

The Chairman, in acknowledging the vote, thanked the shareholders for their continued support, and observed that they would ultimately reap the benefit. He congratulated them on their confidence and patience.

### THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1918.

(University qualification for the Constituency of the University of Durham, the Victoria University of Manchester, the University of Liverpool, the University of Leeds, the University of Sheffield, the University of Birmingham, and the University of Bristol, forming and being a University Constituency under the said Act.)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that claims of persons entitled to vote at a Parliamentary election in respect of qualifications at this University must be sent to the Registration Officer of the University on or before 31st July, 1918, and in future years on or before 31st January and 31st July, provided that as regards a man he is of full age, and is a British subject and not subject to any legal incapacity, and has received a degree (other than an honorary degree) at this University, and that as regards a woman, she has attained the age of thirty years and has received a degree (other than an honorary degree) at this University.

No person who received a degree at this University before 6th February, 1918, will have a right to be registered unless he or she makes a claim for the purpose.

Forms of claim can be obtained from the Registration Officer of the University.

In this University a fee of 10s. 6d. will be charged in respect of registration.

A birth certificate may be required.

Provisional lists of voters will be open to inspection at the University up to 31st August, 1918, inclusive, and in future up to the 28th February and the 31st August respectively, and all claims in respect thereof or objections thereto (forms of which can be obtained from the Registration Officer of the University) must be made and sent in on or before 7th September, 1918, and in succeeding years on or before 7th March and 7th September.

W. M. GIBBONS, Registrar.

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At 5.30 P.M.—**A PUBLIC MEETING** Will be held in CAXTON HALL, Westminster. Speakers—The Master of University College, Oxford: "The Liberty of Prophecy"; The Rev. Harold Anson, Rector of Birch-in-Rusholme: "Liberal Theology for the Working Man"; The Rev. H. D. A. Major, Editor of the "Modern Churchman": "Interchange of Pulpits."

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